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# Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

211 W. 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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Published  
October through May  
\$3.50 per year

DECEMBER 1949

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly from October to May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. Subscription price \$3.50 per year; single copies 45 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single copy rate. [Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rico, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoan Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. [Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows; 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$3.74), on single copies 3 cents (total 48 cents). [Patrons are requested to make all remittance payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. [Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. [All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. [Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois under the Act of March 3, 1879. [Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

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Printed in the U. S. A.

# ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

VOL. XXVI

DECEMBER, 1949

No. 8

## A First Grade Experiences Reading

JOYCE W. COX<sup>1</sup>

"I wish we could have a rabbit," Johnny said. "Yes, a rabbit!" Suddenly the group knew at once that they wanted a rabbit; no other animals were mentioned after this one.

"I wonder where we could get a rabbit?" asked the teacher.

"At the store," - Linda.

"A boy next door to us has a rabbit," - David.

"I saw some rabbits at the zoo," - Larry

"Let's write these ideas down, so that we won't forget them", said the teacher; and she wrote each child's suggestion on the black board.

For several days the beginning first graders had been bringing their pets to school, to tell each other about them. After explaining all he knew about his pet, a child might dictate a story to the teacher; or the group might compose a story, which the teacher would record on the black-board. A typical story was:

Blackie is my dog.

He likes to eat.

He likes to sleep.

He likes to play with me.

These stories were not made into charts; there was no need to make a permanent record of them. They were used to record the immediate experiences of the children. It was fun to see what they told

about their pets, made into actual stories. Some children might notice that several lines started alike; but the stories were not used for drill purposes.

Not many of these children had pets, because they lived in semi-industrial areas and lacked the space. They were almost desperate in their desire to play with the pets which were brought in. When the teacher suggested that they might like a pet of their own to keep at school, the above conversation about the rabbit resulted.

The group made plans to find out all they could, from parents and friends, as to where they could get a rabbit. The next morning they were full of information and ideas. One had a want-ad, cut out of the paper, advertising rabbits for sale, which his mother had found for him. One reported that his mother knew someone who sold rabbits; she had telephoned this friend, and found that she would sell the group a rabbit for one dollar, but that it would not be ready for them for two weeks. Great excitement prevailed at the thought that we had actually located a rabbit - especially when we were invited to come and see it. This little trip involved much planning as to how we would act while we were around the rabbit, and

<sup>1</sup>A teacher in the schools of Springfield, Mo.

while we were walking there and back. A few of our decisions were:

- To be quiet around the rabbit.
- To keep our hands off the rabbit.
- To "act nice" around the lady.
- To keep on the side walk.
- To look for cars before crossing the street.

These plans were carefully recorded; and when we returned, we checked to see if we had carried them out.

"Where can we get a dollar?" This was the next question the group began to discuss.

"I could bring a dollar," said Richard.

"I could take my savings stamps to the post office and get some money," came from Judy.

There were many similar suggestions, but the teacher thought the pet would mean more to the children, if they all had a share in its purchase. Several were not able to bring money. She suggested that perhaps the group could do something to earn the money.

"We could bring things from home and sell them."

"We could make things here at school and sell them to the other children."

"We could make lemonade and sell it."

"We could have a show, and charge the other kids to see it."

Much conversation - many ideas; but somehow the show idea caught fire; and soon we found ourselves deep in plans. A circus had been to town recently; and this idea became uppermost. Tricks began to be practised - rolling somersaults, backward rolls, hand-springs for the acrobats. There were several clowns in the group who were really funny. One child had two pairs of boxing gloves; so some matches

were arranged. The climax of these matches came when two clowns had a mock match, which ended with a hilarious surprise attack against the unsuspecting referee. A tap dancer in the group became our dancing girl; and another brought a grass skirt, and did the Hula. Everyone was in the grand march.

It took much planning, and much writing down of the plans - because we needed to keep track of our plans, not as an excuse to have something to read. It took much evaluating and re-evaluating of ideas. We checked at each planning time to see what we had done and what still needed to be done. It had been decided to charge two cents admission, with mothers and teachers paying five cents. Our show had to be advertised, so large posters (18 x 36) were made, to take from room to room. A sample was an easel painting of a dancing girl, with this story written under it:

Jeanne is our dancing girl.  
She kicks up high.  
She whirls around.  
She turns over and over.

The show was held at play time one day for the lower grades; the next day for the upper grades. Everyone in school came; and felt they should have paid more.

The money was taken to its owner, and the rabbit jubilantly brought to school, complete with hutch and food (since the show was a financial success).

"How can we take care of our rabbit?"

"What does he need?"

"What will keep him healthy?"

Answers to these questions were the result of many days of talking to people who might be able to help us, of looking through books with pictures of rabbits,



with the teacher reading the accompanying stories or information. The woman we bought the rabbit from came to school to answer questions, and tell us of her experience with rabbits. To record the most important things we learned; and to help us remember them, the following large chart was made and hung over the hutch:

#### HOW TO KEEP BUGS BUNNY HEALTHY

Our rabbit needs green food every day,  
Our rabbit needs rabbit pellets every day.  
Our rabbit needs sleep every day.  
Our rabbit needs fresh air all the time.  
Our rabbit needs to run and play every day.

The chart was illustrated with the rabbit eating a carrot.

Bugs Bunny was the name chosen, after many names had been mentioned, and all of them written on the board. Once this name was mentioned, it was the immediate favorite; all other names were erased, and Bugs Bunny was written in large letters, so that a sign could be made for his hutch. There was a lot of fun about the name; and one child said, "They both start just the same." Another said, "Yes - two B's." The teacher said, pointing to them, "Yes, Bugs and Bunny each start with B." Bobby said, "My name starts with B too." "Yes," said the teacher, "it starts with B too," as she wrote *Bobby* under *Bugs Bunny*.

This experience of planning for a pet is one illustration of many meaningful activities that were developed in the early stages of reading. Before three weeks had elapsed, the first grade group had many experiences doing things that seemed important to them. Many everyday experiences of these children were recorded or transposed into stories, written on the blackboard or on large sheets of paper. In

the doing of these things that seemed important to them, the children found from time to time that it was very helpful to have something written down that could be re-read. Their plans for the day were written down; then at the end of the work period they came together to see if they had accomplished these plans; or if not, what they should do next, in order to get the job done. From the very beginning, these children experienced the importance of reading, because they were using it in their activities.

From the first day of school many and varied books and magazines had been in the book-shelves and on the reading table. Perhaps fifteen pre-primers were among them. The children had looked through all this material with great interest, from their first day. After many experiences with reading, there were several children spending more and more time with books, asking, "What does this say?" These children were ready to read from books.

One day it was planned that these eager children should begin to read from books. While the rest of the group was engaged in creative painting and clay work, a few children were asked to select a book they would like to read, from a group of pre-primers. Naturally they did not all choose the same book. Then they sat in a small group with the teacher, looking at and talking about their books with each other, while the teacher helped one child learn to read a part of his book. She might say, "This book is about a boy just about as old as you are. His name is Dick. Where do you think Dick is going in his car?" After conversation in which the child expressed his ideas, or related

similar experiences of his own, the teacher told him what the story said. After child and teacher have gone over the story a few times, the teacher may say, "Would you like to read your book to Jimmy?" while the teacher begins to help Anne with the book she has chosen. Soon Anne and Bobby are reading their books to others in this small group, or to each other, while the teacher helps Jimmy, and so on. The children read aloud, because that is the way they learn to read, by testing out words with their lips, and listening to the sounds they make. At this beginning period (so important to the child, because now he feels he knows what school is) when his eyes sparkle with the thrill of discovery of his own ability, no one says "Sh!" or "Be more quiet." Nothing is done to mar his great excitement in knowing how to read. He reads aloud, over and over, to himself, or to anyone he can get to listen to him. He loves an audience; and he likes being an audience, when a class-mate requests him to listen.

This reading process is like the ever-widening circles caused by a pebble thrown into a pool - a few children at a time learn to read, then more are added gradually until the entire group is involved in the process. Each child progresses at his own rate of speed, from book to book, of his own choice. It is amazing how well the individual can choose a book to fit his needs and ability - he tries some of it, and if it is too hard, he is quick to see that it is, and to choose another. If this process has been gone through as children are introduced to reading, they reach the stage, as soon as they begin to read books independently, at which reading is a new form of experi-

ence; it is an end in itself. In addition to reading for information, he will read because he loves to read; he paints because he loves to paint; he skips because he loves to skip; and he reads because he loves to read. When children come into the room before school and have a choice of activities, many of them will choose books and begin to read (aloud of course). They may sit cross-legged on the floor, or sit in the play-house, hardly noticing where they are, in their absorption. They help each other with words. They seem to teach themselves to read in a permissive atmosphere, where neither barriers are placed in their way, nor undue pressure put upon them; and where they have no trumped-up situations to trick them into reading.

As the children read individually, the teacher moves among them, listening to part of a story read by one, hearing one child tell his story or part of it, helping another with difficult words, or just listening to impromptu comments about their stories as they recommend them to each other. Since they are reading aloud, it is possible for the teacher to tell how they are progressing, without listening to each one read every day. Sixth grade children love to come in and listen to first graders read; and are a big help to the busy teacher.

The teacher has a notebook, and keeps a dated record of each child's revealing comments, interests, difficulties and progress. For example, under Johnnie's name the following excerpts may be made:

Sept. 21. Comments on Bugs Bunny chart:  
"Look, they all start just the same, with 'Our rabbit.' Then notices the first three words are the same. Then says,

(Continued on Page 460)

# Reading Readiness: Semantic Implications\*

NILA BANTON SMITH<sup>1</sup>

## *What Is Semantics*

Bobby came home from his first attendance at Sunday School with an enthusiastic account of what he had seen and done.

"What did you like best of all?" inquired his mother.

"The songs about the things *you* do," said Bobby.

"What were they? Tell me some more about them," said Mother.

"Oh, they were about 'Sewing in the morning' and 'Bringing in the Sheets,'" explained Bobby.

This story is an illustration of the influence which experience exerts upon the interpretation of language symbols, and this will be a strong point of emphasis in our discussion of "The Implications of Semantics for Reading Readiness."

But perhaps we should get down to the more serious business of explaining the term *semantics*. What is *semantics*?

*Semantics* is a very old term; I suspect this word has appeared in Webster's dictionary from the very beginning where it is defined thus:

The science of meaning, as contrasted with phonetics, the science of sounds; the historical and psychological study and the classification of changes in the signification of words or forms, viewed as normal and vital factors in linguistic development, including such phenomena as specialization and expansion of meaning, meliorations and pejorative tendencies, metaphor, adaptation and the like.

This old definition doesn't exactly de-

scribe *semantics* as we know it today, and the publishers of the latest Webster's Unabridged Dictionary have recognized this disparity. In the front of the 1948 edition, a few pages have been inserted bearing the heading "New Words," and in the category of these "New Words" we find *semantics* along with *scalation*, *screwball*, *sulfa drugs*, and *supersonic*.

The new definition of *semantics* is as follows:

That science dealing with the relationship between symbols and what they refer to and with human behavior in reaction to symbols, including unconscious attitudes, influence of social institutions and epistemological and linguistic assumptions, and having as an objective the systematizing of the language of science and the unification of knowledge.

These two definitions indicate that it is not easy to tell what *semantics* is. A comparison between the two definitions, however, points up a very significant trend. Such a comparison throws into bold relief some of the important differences between the writing of the old semantacists and modern semantacists. The old semantacists were primarily concerned with the historical development and the classification of meanings. The chief concerns of our present-day semantacists are to point out relationships between symbols and what they refer to; and the effect of the interpretation of language symbols upon human behavior. In other words it considers meanings in relationship to experience.

\*Presented at the Annual Reading Clinic Institute, Temple University. Philadelphia 22, Pa., January 31, 1949.

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and to man's way of interpreting his universe, his method of thinking, his values. It's all tied up with human living.

### *The "Triangle of Reference"*

Ogden and Richards offer us a very useful hypothesis in their "Triangle of Reference," which is reproduced in part below. (2, p. 11)

Thought or reference

symbol  referent

As an example for use in explaining the triangle, the authors use the sentence "The child returned home." Several fifth grade children were asked to read this sentence and tell what *home* meant to them.

To one child the referent for home was a Spanish type house; to another, a trailer; to another, a Southern Colonial; to another, a Quonset Hut; to another, a California bungalow; and to another, a mansion. The *symbol* for home was the same for all children, but the meaning which each one deduced from this symbol in thought went back to a different referent.

Our job in the Readiness period is not that of teaching printed symbols and thought interpretation of them; our job at this stage is largely that of establishing referents for words to which the child may refer in interpreting printed symbols later on.

### *Why Do Modern Methods Demand Increased Attention to Semantics?*

From the beginning of reading instruction until about thirty years ago, the major emphasis was on teaching the child to pronounce the words. Little or no attention was given to meanings.

While engaged in some recent re-

search, I came upon a charming account of a child's first experience in reading. This account appeared in the *New England Magazine* in 1832, something over one hundred years ago. As I read it to you, please contrast this child's experience with the experience of a present-day child during his Reading Readiness period.

"Come and read" says the mistress to the little flaxen-headed creature of doubtful gender, for the child is in petticoats and sits on the female side as close as possible to its guardian sister. But then those coarser features, tanned complexion, and close-clipped hair, with other minutiae of aspect, are somewhat contradictory to the feminine dress. "Come and read." It is the first time that he-or-she was ever inside of a school-house and in the presence of a schoolma'm, according to recollection; and the order is heard with shrinking timidity. But the sister whispers an encouraging word and helps "tot" down from the seat, who creeps out into the aisle, and hesitates along down to the teacher, biting his fingers, or scratching his head, perhaps both, to relieve the embarrassment of the novel situation.

"What is your name, dear?" "Tholomon Icherthon," lisps the now discovered he, in a choked voice scarce above a whisper. "Put your hands down by your side, Solomon, and make a bow." He obeys, if a short and hasty jerk of the head is a bow.

The alphabetical page of the spelling-book is presented and he is asked, "What's that?" But he cannot tell. He is but two years and a half old, and has been sent to school to relieve his mother from trouble, rather than to learn. No one at home has yet shown or named a letter for him. He has never had even that celebrated character, round o, pointed out to his notice. It was an older beginner, most probably, who being asked a similar question about the first letter of the alphabet, replied, "I know him by sight, but can't call him by name." But our namesake of the wise man does not know the gentleman even by sight, nor any of his twenty-five companions.



Solomon Richardson has at length said A, B, C, for the first time in his life. He has *read*. "That's a nice boy; make another bow and go to your seat." He gives another jerk of the head and whirls on his heel and trots back to his seat, meeting the congratulatory smile of his sister with a satisfied grin, which, put into language would be, "There I've read . . . ha'n't I."

Thus it was that mere infants started on the pilgrimage along the weary road to reading a century ago - learning the alphabet, spelling, pronouncing words. It was not until early in our present century that sentiment began to shape up in favor of teaching reading as a thought-getting process. Once the idea began to take hold, it found fertile soil for growth in American schools where new ideas easily take root. Since that time we have been giving meaning equal stress along with word recognition. For a long time, however, this meaning emphasis in reading was largely concerned with questions and checks based on perfectly obvious answers which called for little more than reproduction, as: "How many cakes did Peter have?" "Who threw the ball?" "What toys did Baby have?" "What did Jimmie say?" etc.

The trend in reading instruction now is to dig down beneath the surface to deeper meanings; to ask questions and to use checks which will demand the use of the higher thought processes in gleaning *the full sense of meanings* from the printed page. Therefore, the science of semantics which deals with precise word meanings and relationships and our reaction to them, has many implications and applications for us throughout the grades at this stage of development in reading history.

#### *Examples of Confused Thinking*

Possibly a few concrete examples of

confused thinking and the reason for it, will bring us closer to our problem in dealing with Reading Readiness cases. I was recently riding down Fifth Avenue with a friend from the South. Among other things, I pointed out the Flatiron Building as an object of special interest. She viewed the structure for a moment and then said, "I don't see why it is called a flatiron building. It is neither flat nor is it made of iron."

"It's shaped like a flatiron," I explained.

A minute elapsed in silence. Then my friend burst forth, "Well I still don't get it. A flat piece of iron can be any shape."

Realizing that something important had been lacking in my explanation, I expanded by saying, "It's three-cornered like an iron you use in ironing clothes."

"Oh," she replied with relief and perfect understanding, "You mean 'a smoothing iron!'"

If this grown friend from the South who was not familiar with the term "flatiron" had so much difficulty in interpreting the significance of the name of this building, I wondered what would happen in the minds of the children of today who as adults view the flatiron building on a sightseeing tour. To them the tool used in removing wrinkles from clothes is known simply as an "electric iron."

An acquaintance told me of a similar misunderstanding of language symbols by her four-year old son. She frequently told him a story, and then let him draw a picture to illustrate the story. One day she told him the story of Adam and Eve. Later he drew a picture and brought it back to

show to his Mother. She saw many trees and flowers in the Garden of Eden, a large figure which she knew he meant for God, and a man and a woman who presumably were Adam and Eve. She was somewhat puzzled, however, by a little square box-like object down in the left-hand corner of the page. "What is that?" she asked.

"That's the car," explained the child.

The mother, somewhat puzzled said, "But, I didn't say anything about a car!"

"Well," replied the youngster, "You said God *drove* them out of the Garden of Eden."

In both of these situations the speaker and the listener had different referents for the same word. This often happens in reading: the author and the reader have different referents for the same word. This is a juncture at which the teacher has an important service to perform.

I think we sometimes overlook or deal too slightly with the perplexities, confusions, lack of understanding in the minds of little children. Often the common-place in conversation and reading is meaningless to them because of their lack of experience in building the right concepts.

#### *Providing Experiences to Insure Meaningful Concepts*

The problem is before us. Now what can we do about it during the Reading Readiness period?

One of our most important responsibilities during this period is that of providing children with a wealth of first-hand experiences accompanied by free language expression, and interchange. This will equip them with a rich fund of referents

to use in their later interpretation of reading symbols.

The Readiness teacher should make some checks of her pupil's experiences and supply desirable experiences which are lacking. There are several ways in which the teacher can glean indications of the extent of background experiences which her pupils have had, and which might contribute to their ability to understand the content of their early reading materials.

She may gain valuable information in regard to the richness of their experiences by listening to their spontaneous conversation; by noting what they talk about in the story hour; by noting their ability to understand the common things and relationships mentioned in stories which are read or told to them.

If she wishes to obtain more direct information concerning some of the children of whom she is in doubt, she may ask them such questions as these:

Have you any pets at home? What are they?

Have you any toys at home? What are they?

Have you a garden? Is it a vegetable or a flower garden? What grows in the garden?

Do you ever help Mother at home? What do you do? Help with cooking? Cleaning? Mowing the lawn? What else?

Do you ever go to the store for Mother?

What store - grocery? meat market bakery? drug store? What do you buy?

Do you ever go on auto trips to the country with Father and Mother? (or if

the child lives in the country ask if he ever goes to the near-by town or city with Father and Mother.) What do you see?

Have you ever traveled on a train? Tell about it.

Have you ever visited an airport? What did you see?

Have you ever been to the beach? (or if the child lives inland ask if he has ever been to the lake, giving the name of some near-by lake.) What did you see?

Have you ever visited a farm? (This question of course will only be asked of children who live in a town or city.)

Have you ever been to a circus, or zoo? (If the children live where this is possible.) Describe what you saw.

Once the teacher has ascertained the types of experiences which a given group needs, then she should proceed to provide these particular experiences in the following ways:

1. Build up a rich and attractive environment in the classroom; have pets, plants, pictures, books; encourage children to bring in nature materials and objects of interest to them such as seeds, stones, flowers, tadpoles, etc.

2. Let the children have experiences in working together in such group activities as cooking, preserving, weaving, gardening, preparing for entertainments, etc.

3. Let them have opportunities to create, construct, and invent with the use of such mediums as clay, paper, cardboard, cloth, and wood.

4. Take them on excursions, thus bringing them into closer contact with community activities and helpers and institutions; and with nature materials and phenomena.

5. Invite people in to talk to the children about topics of special interest.

6. Show films to the children depicting phases of life about them and about other children.

7. Show still pictures of informative value.

8. Read and tell stories of informative value and stories involving other children's experiences.

During all of these experiences, the teacher will of course be highly conscious of the need for associating spoken symbols with objects, actions and situations. She, herself, will take particular care to attach words appropriately to referents in new experiences, and she will give children abundant opportunities to use these words orally in conversation.

### *Laying the Foundation for Understanding Meanings of Specific Types of Words*

During the Readiness Period, we can go farther than providing general experiences for concept enrichment. We can do some specialized work with word types.

Nouns are fundamental in conveying meanings either in spoken or written language. A young child will ask for "water" several years before he will say, "Please give me a glass of cold water." So a basic consideration in laying the foundation for the interpretation of reading symbols is to insure clarification of concepts in regard to the spoken words for nouns which children will meet in their early reading experiences.

The teacher should be attentive to many incidental opportunities for having children name various objects in natural conversation in connection with their classroom experiences. For example, if a child brings a toy train or a doll to school opportunities should be given for many chil-

dren to name this object, not as a forced exercise, of course, but in natural conversation.

In addition to experiences in identifying nouns with related objects, the identification and clarification procedures may be extended to pictures. A group of pictures representing objects may be placed in the chart container or on the chalk ledge, and children who need the experience may be given turns in picking up the pictures and naming them, as "This is a train," "This is a doll," "This is Mary," "This is Bill."

Verbs are of equal importance along with nouns in their basic function of conveying meanings. The teacher should be alert for opportunities to have children name actions as they occur, integrated in their natural school activities.

Additional experiences should be given through games in which children interpret by naming the actions in which different children engage. One procedure is to call upon some child to perform an action, then call upon the other children to "guess" what he did. Such verbs as the following may be illustrated in this way: run, walk, jump, hop, sing, eat, drink, sleep, climb. After a child has performed in each case, the teacher asks a question to this effect: "What can Tom do?" The answer should be: "Tom can jump." By phrasing the questions and answers in this way the root word only is emphasized, and the complicated factor of introducing *ed* and *ing* forms at this point is avoided.

Actions may also be represented in pictures in which a person or animal is doing something which strongly suggests a certain verb. Many types of games may

be played with such pictures. Each of you will be able to devise your own.

The qualifying words or adjectives cause children trouble in beginning reading, probably because they do not represent such concrete meanings as do nouns and verbs.

As in all other instances, the teacher should be alert to possibilities of having children name objects in terms of qualifying phrases when the opportunity presents itself in connection with their regular work.

She may also have at hand a box of small toys and small miscellaneous objects. The children may be shown the contents of this box, after which each child is given a turn at taking something from the box, concealing it in his hands so that the object is not visible. The other children try to guess what this child has in his hands, by asking, for example: "Is it the *red fire engine*?" "Is it the *little doll*?" etc. The child in each case, answers: "No, it isn't the *red fire engine*," and so on. When a child guesses the object which the other child is holding, then he has an opportunity to take an object in his hands, etc.

For use in picture activities, the teacher may mount pictures which illustrate phrases, such as, "a pretty flower," "a happy boy," "a sick girl," and so on.

In using these pictures the teacher may say: "Find the picture of a pretty flower." A designated child finds the picture, holds it up, and says: "This is a pretty flower."

The color words are appropriate for use in beginning this work. A sample group of pictures for use might be as follows:



- a red airplane
- a brown cake
- a green tree
- a blue dress
- a yellow sweater
- a black dog
- a white house
- a purple book

Phrases using qualifying words other than colors, which can be pictured and can usually be found readily in magazines, are:

- a pretty ribbon
- a happy baby
- a funny Jack o'Lantern
- a round ball
- a square box

Concepts of quantitative words, such as, *large, small, many, few*, the names of numerals, etc., usually met in early reading, are probably more hazy to many children than those of qualifying words.

The concept for many of these words should be clarified during the readiness period through incidental usage in connection with classroom activities, and through direct use of pictured games, similar to those described in connection with the qualifying words. An appropriate group of pictures to use for this purpose might be similar to those named in this list:

- a large house
- a small house
- many people
- few people
- two blocks
- three apples
- one top
- four birds

Prepositions are somewhat more abstract than the other words which we have been discussing so far, and cause children much difficulty in beginning reading. We can do a great deal during the Readiness

period to establish referents for these connecting words.

Action games are useful in dealing with prepositions. An adaptation of "Simon Says Thumbs Up" may be used in giving a set of directions involving prepositions as:

- Place your book
- over your head
- under your table
- behind you
- in front of you
- at your left
- at your right
- on the floor
- in your table drawer

A series of pictures, appropriate for working with prepositions, may be placed on the chalk ledge. A child is asked to pick up a certain picture. If he picks up the right one, he may take it to his seat. The one who accumulates the most pictures wins the game.

The directions for this game should, of course, emphasize the meanings of prepositions, for example:

- Get a picture of a bird flying *over* a tree.
- Get a picture of a bird sitting *on* a branch.
- Get a picture of a cat *under* the table.
- Get a picture of a boy going *to* school.
- Get a picture of a boy coming *from* school.
- Get a picture of a girl *with* a hat.
- Get a picture of a girl *without* a hat.

Something also, can be done during this period in the way of developing sharp contrasts between opposites. Take advantage of incidental opportunities to contrast opposites in the classroom, using accurate descriptive words in each case as: "Mary has a long pencil and a short pencil." "Tom's rubbers are wet but his feet are dry." "It's cold outside but warm in here."

A collection of pictures may also be

used in working with opposites. Games may be played in which the children are given such suggestions as these:

- Get the picture of the tall man.
- Get the picture of the short man.
- Get the picture of the little dog.
- Get the picture of the big dog.
- Get the picture of the new sweater.
- Get the picture of the old sweater.

"Class names" or words which stand for a whole classification of objects often cause trouble in first grade reading because many children do not generalize to the extent of associating several objects with one classification until they have arrived at later stages of maturity. An excellent procedure to use during the Readiness period is that of having children classify pictures according to their classification name. As an example of this procedure place on the chalk ledge several pictures of animals, several pictures of toys, several miscellaneous pictures. Have individual children pick up and place pictures of *animals* until all animals have been placed together. Repeat, having the pictures of *toys* placed together. Use the same procedure in establishing the generalized meaning for *pets, clothes, food, fruit, vegetables, buildings, things to ride in*, etc.

At other times the children may cut from magazines or catalogs pictures of cars, dogs, dishes, people, etc. The pictures may be pasted on paper, and the teacher may label each classification if she so desires.

Children also enjoy telling or drawing all of the things they would find at a clothing store, at a bakery, at a shoe store, at a grocery store, etc. All of these are classification experiences.

These are just a few suggestions for

possible ways of working with special types of words. Every ingenious teacher can devise many more.

### *Sensing Word Meanings in Their Contextual Relationship*

The semantacists tell us that words work together in co-operation with one another, and that the meaning of any one word is influenced by other words which surround it in text. The Readiness period is none too soon to develop in children an awareness of the effect of context upon meanings.

One simple way of giving meaning experiences in contextual settings is that of stating a sentence orally, omitting a word, and asking the children to supply it. It is advisable to combine this oral context work with pictures the first several times that you use it.

Every first grade teacher has collections of pictures which she uses for a variety of purposes. While working with any particular set of pictures, she may at times make a statement, leaving out a word which can be represented by one of the pictures. She may then call upon a child to hold up and name the picture of the missing word. For example, one of the pictures on the chalk ledge might be the picture of a cake (in such a case none of the other pictures displayed should represent an edible). The teacher says, "Boys and girls like to eat———." A child is then called upon to pick up the right picture (the picture of the cake), hold it before the group, and say "Cake." All the children are then asked to repeat the complete sentence, "All boys and girls like to eat cake."

After having had several experiences

in supplying a word in a sentence with the use of a picture, children will be ready to supply missing words in oral statements without the use of pictures. In this situation the teacher explains to the children that she is going to say a sentence, leave out a word, and see if they can tell what that word should be. She then states some simple sentence such as "Apples grow on ———," leaving out the last word. The children supply the word which in this case is *trees*.

It is usually easier at first, if you leave a noun to be supplied such as: "You sleep in a ——— (bed)." "I read to you from a ——— (book)." "Sally has a new ring on her ——— (finger)." Eventually, however, children will become adept at supplying verbs, and even qualifying words in such sentences as: "When we go to the table we ——— (eat)." "When we are thirsty, we ——— (drink)." "The sun is very ——— (bright) today."

Such experiences as these not only help children to become aware of the fact that words work together and that the meaning of one depends upon the meaning of the others, but it also prepares them for the use of the contextual technique as one tool to apply in finding out what a new word is when encountered in a sentence in their readers, later on.

#### *Associating Concepts Directly with Reading Symbols*

All of the activities suggested so far have been experiential, linguistic, or pictorial. There should be some opportunity, also, during the Readiness period for children to associate concepts directly with reading symbols. After they have learned to read, the reading process will be largely

that of re-constructing experience through the use of reading symbols; in other words the symbols will come first in the process and will touch off the interpretation process. During the Readiness period, however, the opposite should be the case... meaning first, then symbol representation. In other words this is a period in which we should pre-fill empty shells of symbols with the meat of meaning. At this stage we should be pouring meanings into symbols rather than taking meanings out of symbols.

Some practical ways in which we can attach meanings to reading symbols without requiring children to read are as follows:

Print name cards and let each child wear his card pinned to his clothing, or suspended from a cord around the neck.

When taking a walk or going on an excursion, have children note the names on packages in a grocery store window; signs on store buildings; names of streets; names on trucks, street cars and buses; danger signs, etc.

Place labels on objects in the room when they may serve some functional purpose, for example, label the cupboard where the scissors can be found, place *in* and *out* signs on swinging doors to prevent an accident, label hooks in the hall with the children's names, etc.

The children themselves may prepare simple labels for their construction work or large paintings and drawings as: *City Airport, Tom's Home*.

They may make class or individual scrap books, each page of which contains a picture or a collection of pictures which they have cut from magazines. The teacher may pass out labels typed on a typewriter with primer-sized type. The children may paste these labels under the pictures on the pages of their scrap books.

During the entire Readiness period the teacher should frequently let children

see their own words flow into printed symbols on the blackboard. Take advantage of every opportunity to write in manuscript as the children watch notices, plans, suggestions, directions which they, themselves, have composed. While the children should not be required to *read* these blackboard words, phrases or sentences, they will have had the valuable experience of seeing meanings put into reading symbols, meanings which grow out of their own experiences.

During the course of this talk I have tried to explain what semantics is, why the application of semantic principles to reading is important; and I have attempted to offer a few practical procedures and suggestions for use in putting some of the

implications of semantics to work in the classroom during the Reading Readiness period. There are many, many more possibilities which I haven't mentioned. The semantic area really is a pioneer field as yet in reading instruction and as such it flings out a strong challenge to all of us. Let's see what cultivation will do for it!

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### A FIRST GRADE EXPERIENCES READING

(Continued from Page 450)

"They all end just the same, except one."

Sept. 30 When another teacher, Mrs. Shannon, is introduced, says, "Mrs. Shannon! That sounds like *shadow*".

Oct. 6. - Asks the word *fun*; says, "That's like the first part of funny."

Oct. 15 - Asks the word *last*; says, "If it started with an F, it would be fast."

Such a note book is invaluable for telling just where each child is in his progress. When a child has difficulty with some words, such as *how*, *when*, *many*, *where*, he may make a list of these words, or write each word on a small card, and drill himself on them until he knows them; or he may ask another child to help him learn them. Such a child will come to the teacher in great excitement, saying, "Now I know *when*, and I almost know *where*". A friendly smile of encourage-

ment will make him determined to master his difficulties.

All that is needed for first graders to become fluent readers, with complete understanding of what they read, are these three things:

1. A rich and meaningful experiential background.
2. A permissive atmosphere.
3. Huge quantities of reading material.

Teachers who teach reading individually for the first time will be incredulous at the vast amount of reading that will be done. Many dozens of individual books are a necessity. When each child is allowed to develop his own ability to its fullest capacity, reading becomes a delight to both teacher and child. This teacher can hardly wait to get to school each morning to see what unique accomplishment each child will make that day.



# A New Proposal Concerning Beginning Reading

As described to WILLIAM H. BURTON

by

DR. I. A. RICHARDS AND

MISS CHRISTINE GIBSON<sup>1</sup>

A given group of children learns to read easily and well. Their voices, expressions, and behavior show that understanding and enjoyment are both present. These children look forward eagerly to the reading period, seek new books on the browsing tables and shelves. Another group of equal intelligence is not so happy with its primer and first readers. Reading is slow and halting. The material is neither understood nor enjoyed. Eagerness to read further is not present.

A number of factors are involved, as we well know: physical and emotional status, confidence of the children, past experiences, socio-economic level, readiness, content of first reading materials, method of first introduction, and the ability and personality of the teacher. The ability and personality of the teacher will affect any method for good or for ill, but the actual procedure itself is inescapably a basic factor.

*The dilemma: how to balance mechanics with meaningful content.* The primary teacher who is to introduce reading to children first entering school is confronted with a dilemma. The dilemma is itself difficult enough, but the choices made in dealing with it are of crucial importance for later growth or disability in reading. The dilemma is: mechanics first or interesting content first. The teacher may aim to give children sufficient mastery of me-

chanical skills without much stress on what is being read. The teacher may aim to develop interest and enthusiasm for reading through use of interesting content without much regard for the humdrum everyday skills. Materials some years ago overstressed the mechanics, and worse, mechanics of a very dull and formal sort. Absurd systems of syllable sounding, drill on words not only unknown to but unused by children, and with non-meaningful content, labored repetition at the expense of meaning, grew up. The inevitable result was mechanical word calling, singsong oral reading, failure to understand, dislike for reading, and widespread development of serious disabilities. Materials in modern times over-corrected for stress on mechanics and aimed at interest and enthusiasm. Pictures and stories which were interesting and meaningful were supplied. Systematic improvement of necessary reading skills was actually neglected. The inevitable results were, despite interest and enthusiasm, inability to read new materials and absence of any method for attacking unknown words. All degrees of adjustment between mechanics and content will be found between the extremes noted. All reputable systems of teaching reading today give specific attention to this balance.

We know that reading should not be the "scourge of infancy." The children

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should not meet it as a mysterious and unpleasant rigmarole. Reading should not be thrust unwanted upon unwilling and unready children. There must be interest and pleasure. There must not be frustration. We know also that learning to read, as with learning anything, cannot be all fun and frolic. Systematic provision for basic skills must be included.

The child is being introduced, when he learns to read, to a world of written symbols. He has been living in a world of things, persons, actions and speech symbols. The new written symbol must connect with a meaning in the child's mind, or stimulate him to make up a meaning which fits the situation. This is not easy. Worse still, many words look alike. A familiar word turns up with an unfamiliar meaning. Practically all children look forward to "learning to read," to the real books, but unexpected difficulties and mistakes will bring a reversal of original attitude. This dilemma has been and still is the challenge to teachers and textbook designers in the field. The history of reading instruction shows the steady development of materials and methods for insuring steady development of interests and abilities. Difficulties are anticipated and avoided when possible; frustration and disabilities are minimized.

*Control of letter intake without sacrifice of meaningful content.* One of the latest proposals<sup>2</sup> for beginning reading departs radically from certain of the conventional conceptions. A bold attack is made upon the *mechanics* from the very beginning. I. A. Richards and Christine Gibson, *Words on Paper* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: English Language Research Inc., 13 Kirkland Street, 1943). (Revised and enlarged 1948-1949.)

*Content* is not sacrificed, being derived from objects and operations within the immediate *experience* of all children. The content which carries the mechanics is thus universally familiar and meaningful. The aim of this system is to give quick confident mastery of the mechanics, and at the same time to develop the desirable reading attitude. The materials so far available provide an entrance into reading through a series of systematically graded steps which analyze, separate and give continuous practice in the parts of the reading process for beginners. The wholeness of the process is safeguarded through the use of the sentence as the structure within which the parts may be emphasized. The relation of the sentence and its parts to immediately recognizable experience also guarantees unity.

The *key to the mechanics* is in the *systematic control of letter intake, of word form, and of sentence structure*. All reputable methods control words and sentences in some degree. The new proposal is that letters be controlled as well.

*A very few letters* are used at first, selected so that the easily confused letters are not presented together to the child. One letter only is used from commonly confused pairs: as, for instance, the symmetricals, w m, u n, p q, b d, p d, b q, g b, g d; and the more or less complete forms of one configuration, o c, o e, e c, a o. The child's task of distinguishing a word through seeing clearly the letters which compose it is made much easier. Later when recognition of these words as being made out of these parts (letters) in these positions, has become unfailing, the remaining letters can be introduced in turn

without confusion. The intake is gradual, and builds confidence in the new undertaking. Nothing succeeds like success.

An initial set of letters, *a b i m n s t*, was used in constructing the materials for tryout of this system. The control of the letter intake, of course, limits the range of words which may be used. A sufficient supply of short, interesting and natural sentences dealing with familiar and meaningful things is, however, not too difficult to arrange.

The next point is that the first sentences must be kept very simple. The syntax is, for a time, held fairly constant. The learner's attention can thus be focussed without distraction upon the variations between the sentences, and hence upon reading for meaning. The sentences, furthermore, are all factual statements. Value judgments are not introduced to distract attention from simple uncomplicated meaning. The sentence-situations used as the basis of instruction may be so demonstrated to a halting learner that a one-to-one correlation between parts of the experience and parts of the written sentence which records it can be established. Lessons in reading become clear, simple lessons in the workings of language and so improve processes of thinking from the start.

The foregoing points may be seen easily through examination of the following sample pages:

That is a man.  
That is a hat.  
That is a man.  
That is his hat.  
That hat is his hat.

(*Words on Paper*, page 1)

That is a man.



That is a hat.



That is a man.



That is his hat.

That hat is his hat.

man is his a  
hat that

This is a train.

This is a man.

His hat is in his hand.

That is the train.

That is the man.

The man is in the train.

That is his head.

That is his arm.

This is his hat.

This is his hand.

The man is in the train.

His hat is in his hand.

(*Words on Paper*, page 5)

This is a train.



This is a man.  
His hat is in his hand.

That is the train.  
That is the man.

The man is in the train.



That is his head.  
That is his arm.



This is his hat.  
This is his hand.

The man is in the train.  
His hat is in his hand.

man hat head hand  
hair ear shirt

*The key to the content is, first, that the sentences all deal with items familiar to and meaningful to the children. The authors believe that the resemblance between their materials and those found in the formal non-meaningful readers of a generation ago is superficial only. The forms are similar but not the organization and content. Second, the materials are not to be arbitrarily imposed, but to be introduced in meaningful situations through conversation, visual aids, and activities connecting the material with the experience of the children. Third, excellent learning experiences may be carried on continuously, excursions, construction work, dramatizations, drawings, etc. Film strips are being used with the present experimental edition, and will be available commercially with later editions. Speech work has also been coordinated, through the use of a set of simple language recordings spaced sentences by sentence for group or individual repetition. Phrasing, corrective pronunciation, and miming of meanings for sentences used aurally before or after reading has been a striking feature in some classrooms where the materials have been tried.*

The differences and congruences between words and between sentences enable the learner, the authors believe, to see clearly what it is in the form of the word which makes it that word and no other. The learner not only sees what the word means, but sees how it does this; sees how the word differs from other words which mean other things. The word, furthermore, always occurs within a meaningful sentence and not in isolation. The relation of the parts of the sentence pattern to the

parts of the child's experience is easily exhibited and grasped. *The key task, seeing of a word as a structural item, and within meaningful whole, namely, the sentence, is easily accomplished.* Sentence, word, and letter recognition advance side by side. The size of the problem is kept down. The content keeps it meaningful. The values of analytic methods (word, sentence, story, story-picture) and of the synthetic methods (alphabetic, phonic) are thus combined in the process of perception without loss of actuality and meaning. The values of the experience approach are included.

One significant observation made by teachers who have tried the new material is this: the control of letters produces an unlooked-for benefit, namely, a very good background and readiness for phonics. The constant repetition of the same letters attracts a child's attention and makes analysis of letter sounds very easy. Spelling is also improved, though the extent of that improvement is still a matter for investigation.

The method has not yet been tested under controlled conditions, but experiments are to be set up in the near future. The method has been used, however, in a number of practical school situations, including beginning classes in first grade and individual cases under tutoring for disabilities. Special groups of remedial cases have also used it. A suburban city in the Boston area has tried the material out recently in all slow sections in the primary grades. The supervisor also reports good use by better readers in one class which used the primer in a class of 36 children of

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# Some Observations on Remedial Reading

GERTRUDE BOYD<sup>1</sup>

## *The Children for Remedial Reading*

The children at any age or grade level need help when a difficulty is first noticed. This difficulty may be great or small and of long or short duration. But every child needs individual help in facing problems in reading at one time or another. Every child needs to feel confidence and success not only in reading but in all life situations.

The key to successful remedial work lies in respect for the individual child and a recognition of his capabilities and disabilities. The key to successful teaching also lies in these fields. Every child should feel that his capacity for reading is being tapped to its depth.

## *The Teacher of Remedial Reading*

The first responsibility of the teacher is to develop and maintain a classroom situation which is conducive to continuous growth. The teacher establishes rapport between herself and each child early in the school year. Her attitude and personality tends to produce a healthy emotional development for every child.

The far-seeing teacher prevents many remedial problems. She is understanding, sympathetic, patient and objective. She is able to study and diagnose the behavior of each child objectively, without complicating the situation with her own feelings and emotions. She has the theoretical background which underlies the various methods of teaching reading. She has versatility and imagination to devise innumerable ways of presenting materials. She is

able to adapt new approaches to individuals ever striving for the development of the whole child.

Concepts such as these appear in much of the literature on remedial reading. Then, it is not only desirable but necessary for all teachers to have a wide educational background, high capabilities and to be well adjusted so that they will be able to teach each child with success.

## *The Materials for Remedial Reading*

Modern educators are well aware that the school must take the child where he is and help him go from there. Remedial teachers use this concept with much success. They diligently use good teaching methods and are constantly adjusting materials to differing rates of progress.

Teaching materials are selected, that are appropriate to the age, interests and needs of each child. Textbooks have been widely revised to meet the psychological needs of the child. The understanding of growth and development of individual differences in learning ability precludes the possibility of using the same materials to teach every pupil to achieve mastery of the reading skills at a particular time.

Materials which aid in developing reading skills rapidly and to the highest abilities of each child are selected and used by remedial reading teachers. The same careful selection and adaptation of materials is the right of every child for his best development.

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### *The School and the Curriculum for Remedial Reading*

Great strides have been made in recent years concerning the methods of teaching reading. School administrators know the value of teaching reading when children are physically, socially and emotionally ready. They know the serious consequences of over-emphasizing reading in isolation and of attempting to attain specific standards in reading at a stated time.

School administrators are well aware of the fallacy of placing too much reliance on formal tests for prediction, diagnosis, or grade placement without due regard for developmental patterns of growth among individuals. Again, these factors receive great consideration for remedial reading but why not prevent reading cases from developing by the application of such knowledge through the curriculum for every child in every school?

### *Remedial Instruction in Reading IS for ALL*

The increasing importance of reading in today's social order demands more rapid, efficient and wider reading both in and out of school to keep pace with the times. Because reading is a skill, its proficiency can be developed, as with any other skill, by good coaching and consistent practice. With such instruction the good readers can become the best readers and thus will be able to cope with the vast amount of reading material which appears on the market daily. Every child has the right to instruction and materials which will enable him to develop his capabilities to the fullest extent. Such aid is now being furnished through remedial instruction for reading disability cases. Let us give the

best diagnoses, instruction and materials to every child.

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### A NEW PROPOSAL CONCERNING BEGINNING READING

(Continued from Page 464)

wide ability range. Most of the slow children, it is reported, have quickly achieved mastery of mechanics and developed a favorable reading attitude. Cases of disability have shown a drop. Such results, however, have yet to be verified under controlled conditions.

A new edition of these materials with manual and film strips is in preparation, to permit of extensive trial under experimental conditions. The materials can be used, the authors believe, to follow any type of readiness program and to precede

any basal series. They have also been very successful with non-reading adults.

*Experimental tryout is invited.* The revised primer, *Words on Paper*, together with a teacher's manual and film strips will be made available at cost to any school systems which are interested in using it in controlled experimentation. Correspondence should be directed to Dr. I. A. Richards, Peabody House, 13 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts. A workshop in remedial reading using these materials was offered by Harvard University in its 1949 Summer Session.

# The Language of First Grade Children II

MARIE M. HUGHES AND VIVIAN K. COX\*

## *Comparing the Length of Children's Sentences With the Sentences of Beginning Reading Materials*

An index of maturity of language often used is that of sentence length. The present investigators determined the length of sentences used by the first grade children in their language as recorded during the morning period of "sharing time" or "show and tell," as it is sometimes called. The sentence length used in the sixteen pre-primers and primers from four different series was also determined. The problem of what constituted a sentence did not arise with the readers, as the punctuation was an authentic guide to the intentions of the authors. The situation is quite different, however, when an observer listens to children talk or transcribes material from a recording machine.

### *Length of Sentences*

To facilitate use of the language records, each response of a child had been placed upon a separate card. This made it possible for each investigator to check the

proposed punctuation and to agree on it. Sentences artificially connected by *and* were counted as separate sentences. This arbitrary rule may have affected the results. A recent author<sup>9</sup> analyzed children's speech collected under similar conditions and reported the median length of a sentence as ten words. The present investigators found a median length of eight words for the 770 sentences of the children. The table that follows presents the distribution of words per sentence as found in the speech records.

A median length of five words per sentence was found for the sixteen readers. Approximately eighty per cent (79.4) of the sentences in the readers were shorter than the median length of sentence used by the children. On the other hand, only

\*Mrs. Hughes is a member of the faculty of the University of Utah. Miss Cox is a member of the Los Angeles County School Office.

<sup>9</sup>Hahn, Emily, "The Speech of First Grade Children in Audience Situations." *Elementary English* Vol. XXV. Jan. 1, 1948. p. 40.

Distribution of Numbers of Words per Sentence in Speech Records

	Number of Words per Sentence					
	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 25	More than 25
Number of sentences in speech records	160	343	179	60	24	4



twenty-two per cent of the children's sentences were five words or fewer in length. Moreover, only ten of the sixteen books used sentences as long or longer than the median length of the children's sentences. The percentage of longer sentences (8 words or more) varies greatly from book to book, 00.5 per cent in the book with the least number to 42.6 per cent for the book with the largest number. In contrast, 57.4 per cent of the sentences of the children were eight words or longer.

A mere count of words comprising a sentence does not adequately describe the maturity or complexity of thought expressed. For example, the readers used many sentences composed of repetitive words:

Down came the rain, down, down, down.  
They looked and looked and looked.

Just then she heard the train go by, by, by.

No comparable sentences were found among the children's speech. It should be remembered, however, that the situation in which the records were made was not conducive to children's play on words. Biber<sup>10</sup> found that seven-year-olds enjoyed playing with words. They repeated the word, often adding a series of words of similar sound. These latter were frequently made-up words.

It is instructive to look at some of the longer sentences in the readers and those used by the children. Certain differences will, thereby, become apparent.

From the readers:

He must not find you looking for him.

There she saw Billy's mother and Peter's mother.

<sup>10</sup>Biber, Barbara; Murphy, Lois B.; Woodcock, Louise P.; Black, Irma S.; *Child Life in School*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc. 1942. Chapter 3.

He saw Bill and Alice playing all the day.  
Then away she went on the train to the city.

It is fun to have you come to our school.

"The next day it rains, I will not go out and get all wet," said Peter.

Soon the children and all the pets went home.

From the records of the children:

Yesterday, I went to China City and a real Chinese gave me and my brother a dollar so I'm going to use my dollar for the carnival.

I have one, too, but I won't bring it to school because it might scare you.

Next Saturday I'm moving across the street from the school.

When my daddy sends us some more money, three dollars, my aunt Edna is to go buy me some Sunday shoes.

The day after we made our race car we put the front wheels on the back and the front ones broke off. They were made of wood and had splints from where we were hamering.

The sentences of the readers are much simpler in meaning and construction than those used by the children, although the more important differences are better expressed by the term *dynamic*. A greater number of relationships is expressed by the children. This fact is the result of children having something to tell. The stories of the readers are built to use certain words a given number of times; thus the story is manufactured for a purpose other than that inherent in the story. These two examples are taken from a pre-primer and primer respectively. They represent different series.

Oh, look, look.

See Puff jump and run.

See my little baby go.

See my baby run away.

Away, away, away.

Oh, oh, oh.

Puff is not my baby.  
 "Oh! Oh!" said Baby.  
 "Look at the kitten.  
 Look at the kitten, Nancy.  
 She wants to get away."  
 Nancy said, "She wants Muff.  
 Muff is under the table."  
 The kitten saw Muff.  
 She saw Muff under the table.  
 She ran to Muff.  
 She did not want to ride.  
 She wanted Muff.

### *Style of Sentences*

Sometimes the children spoke in very much the same style as the readers; that is, they built up their "story" in a series of relatively short sentences. However, when the children talked, each sentence added to the story. Such is not always the case with the readers.

From the records of the children:

Mother hen had three baby chicks.  
 Two yellow and one black.  
 I saw the little babies hatch out.  
 The mother hen was setting on the eggs.  
 The chick stuck his head out.

My daddy's going to buy some skates today.  
 He's going to buy some skates for my sister.

We're going over to another girl's house.  
 She has some skates and we're all going to skate together.

Yesterday I got up early.  
 Mother was sick and Don and I went to church.

Ken had to stay home and give my mother shots every two hours.

Don got to go bike riding and I had to stay in and play games.  
 It wasn't any fun, either.

It has long been common to build the stories in the readers around the use of pictures. As the beginning readers are examined for story quality, it becomes apparent that many times the story cannot stand without the picture. Reading the

story is similar to listening to a conversation where the names of people, places, or action are unfamiliar. Since the references are not known the conversation does not make sense. The stories in the readers are not stories except as they are interpreted with the picture; for example, one of the pre-primers shows the picture of two children, Bill and Susan, having a picnic lunch under a tree. The cloth is spread upon the ground with plates of food (sandwiches and cookies), a bottle of milk, glasses, and napkins. Yet the only words on five pages are: look, Bill, stop, at, Pinky, Susan, see, run, away, I. In one case it would be difficult for a child to tell which character is speaking. After all, does it really matter?

There are arguments for and against such use of pictures. They do tell a story which enable the child to pronounce the words of the text; at least he can do so with the help of suggestive questions on the part of the teacher. Accordingly, the full meaning of the words is not dependent upon the printed symbol but upon the picture sequence and occasionally on the ability of the child to put the two together. This is contrary to the child's use of language. The child, speaking before his classmates, projects the entire situation through language. He has something that he really wants to tell to others. The child who related the incident that is herewith included gives his hearers a very good picture of the morning breakfast table.

This morning we had Cream of Wheat.  
 Barbara would not eat hers but dad told her she must eat it because he fixed it and he can make it gooder than mamma.

He put more milk on it.

Barbara ate it all the time she said she didn't want it.

Mamma said, "I wish daddy would make pancakes."

*Vitality of Children's Sentences*

The differences between children's speech and the language of the readers are seen still more clearly when compared with the sentences that are contrived to meet the requirement of a given number of repetitions of a word. The unrealism of a series of remarks allegedly made by a little girl putting her toys away illustrates the poverty of results which are the outcome of stringent vocabulary rules for the preparation of beginning readers. Even the repetitive pattern of the story doesn't save it.

From the readers:

"I must put my white rabbit away.  
It is a toy rabbit.  
It can not play with me.  
*But* I can play with it.  
I will put my white rabbit on the shelf."  
"Books are not toys.  
They do not go to bed.  
*But* I like my books.  
I must put them here on the shelf."

It is safe to assert that no child in putting away a loved toy would say, "It can not play with me. *But* I can play with it." For children such play is reciprocal. What do children think when they read such material? How can it stimulate them? How can they learn to evaluate and associate what is read with their own experience?

A final word needs to be said regarding the vitality of language used by the children and by the beginning books. The word *vitality* suggests language that really says something and says it in a dramatic and forceful manner. Also, some creativity in the use of unusual word or a word that is immediately recognized as particularly apt is present. In any case, the sincerity of the speaker or writer is felt by the recip-

ient. This happens because the feelings and reactions of the speaker or writer are apparent. Probably no difference between children's language and the language employed by beginning readers is greater than that covered by the term *vitality*.

*The Content of Children's Language*

"Miss Smith, do you know what our cat laid yesterday? Five tiny kittens."

"This is my little perfume bottle. I carry it in my purse."

"Yesterday my grandpa brought me a little ring from the dump and shined it all up."

For teachers and others who are privileged to listen to children, there is humor, pathos, adventure, and information in what children talk about—what they consider important enough to relate to others. Those who listen to children discover what they are doing, how they differ from one another, what problems they meet, and something about their worries.

It should be no surprise to find that children talk about themselves. Don't we all? Moreover, the situation in which these speech records were obtained was one in which children were instructed to tell what they had done, where they had been, so forth. Even so the individual contributions present a range of topics because what a given child considers important may not be so considered by another child or may not have happened to him.

As the investigators handled the cards containing the 309 responses of the children, they became conscious that the children used many expressions designating the time of day such and such a thing happened or was to happen; therefore, a count was made to determine the ratio of such designations to the total number of responses. It was found that approximately

one-third of the responses included some reference to time with the word *yesterday* making up some fifty per cent of such designations. Next in order of frequency of use were today, last night, Sunday, and next Sunday. As the child had an opportunity each day to tell something to his classmates, it is not surprising that yesterday and last night were used frequently. This again illustrates how closely related are vocabulary and the situation. Other words denoting time include:

day before yesterday  
the day after  
day before Friday  
next week  
this weekend  
this Thursday  
a few days ago  
the other day

Children appear to consider an acquisition of a new skill important. Several announced at different times that they could count to 100, by 5's or 2's or 10's, or just count. Others said that they could now play a musical instrument. . piano, guitar, violin, accordion were among those mentioned. Still others said that they could tap dance. The everyday skills that are coming under mastery of the young first grade child are apparent in these announcements:

Today I just learned to tie my belt.  
I can tie my own sash.  
Mother doesn't think it's good enough to come to school.

Another child told of learning to skate. The dramatic and realistic description leaves no doubt in the mind of the listener regarding what occurred.

I can skate now. It's three days.  
One day I fell down and fell down.  
One day I fell down some more.  
One day I fell just once.  
And now I don't ever fall.

Then there was the boy who learned to ride a bicycle.

I can ride a bicycle.  
Guess how I learned to ride one.  
Nobody taught me.  
My brother drove me to the corner on his bicycle.  
He pushed me and I just kept going.

Children talk about their possessions, what they have, how, and sometimes where, they secured them. The announcements of possessions made up 17.4 per cent of the 309 responses. Everything seems to have status with these children; at least they present them to their classmates. The possessions mentioned include:

a pin from a Pep box  
some keys given by a sister  
bracelets and rings  
a live turtle  
a croquet set  
a little notebook  
a gold button  
a gun and holster  
a popgun  
"my best book; it has fairy tales."  
a wooden Easter egg, "but  
Easter is over now."

All articles of clothing were mentioned as well as every kind of wheel and transportation toy.

The listener becomes very aware of the range of activities of children as he hears them talk. From one standpoint they appear quite circumscribed; from another they are made wonderful and great because of the enthusiasm and spirit of adventure brought to them by the children. Since this city was by the ocean, there were many trips to the beach and to the parks, but each trip was presented as though it had not previously occurred. Trips to grandmothers and to other cities, attendance at the show, play with the children next door were worthy of description



to classmates. Observations on the way to school were related when anything out of the ordinary happened...a wreck, dog and cats, a concrete mixer, and so forth.

But the activities that rated the most comments were those carried on within the family. Even when family activities are rigidly defined as those in which a member of the family is actually mentioned, 25.8 per cent of the responses were related to family. This definition of family may not be necessary since it excludes all the responses, "We are going....." "We....." In most cases the family may be inferred for the "we" but there were several cases where it might mean neighbors or other children; therefore, all were excluded.

What is important enough among the family activities to be worth mentioning to others? The answers must be given categorically...everything and anything. Sickness in the family was something that others should know. This is easily understood because it involved, for most children, a change in the daily order of things. Daddy is home from the office, grandmother comes to help take care of a sick sister, Daddy gets breakfast, mother brings a present to a sick brother, and so forth. Mothers Day brought forth several reports of family celebrations and stories of presents to mother. Then, there are birthdays: the child's own, his brothers' and sisters', and the parents'. Visitors to the house and visiting away from home were important occasions with the food served often the point of interest.

Preparations for vacation or just a trip for the day to a park, beach, or another city were a source for comment.

It is the small everyday things, however, that tell so much about the child and the affective atmosphere which envelops him. Consider the family relationships that are disclosed by these reports.

When mommie fixed my hair she told me to show it to daddy and he liked the way it was combed. I like it too.

Each night we eat popcorn because my daddy likes it. The corn in the can is yellow. The corn in the sack is yellow. We put the seeds in the popper and grind it.

Yesterday, well, my mama got me a ring and it has my initial on it. She told me to feel the paper bag and I couldn't guess what it was. Then she took it out and showed it and I put it on my finger.

Every time I go call daddy for lunch on Saturday, I try to beat him at the table. He is mostly out in the garage working.

It is almost possible to hear the laughter of the child as he relives this Saturday ritual with his father.

The unusual happening appeared to attract the children. Perhaps they felt an element of humor missed by the adult.

We had our clothes hanging on the line and, boy, did they get wet. They got wetter. This morning my daddy made waffles. They stuck to the iron. Mamma and daddy had to take a fork and clean it out.

Last night we went for a ride.

We got undressed and went in the car.

I don't even know where we went.

Yesterday my mother thought she saw me across the street and she called me. I was in the house playing with blocks.

My mamma painted the sink.

We had to eat in the front room.

We sat on the piano bench.

### *The Meaning of the Language of First Grade Children For Teachers and Textbook Writers*

The language children use tells the teachers something regarding maturity and immaturity of the children. This may be

determined in part by the form of language used. Most of these first grade children demonstrated good control over proper verb form; however, one child announced, "We went to town last night. Everybody buyed something." A few children used "Well" and "see," accompanied by many sighs, as they hesitated in their attempt to marshall their ideas for presentation to others. Since they spoke only when they wished, their language was remarkably free and, for most children, was easily expressed. The knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of children which teachers can gain by listening to them makes it possible for teachers to set more realistic expectancies for each child and to provide proper guidance for his next step.

What can the writers of beginning readers for children learn from a knowledge of children's language ability at the age they enter first grade? They and the teachers can recognize that children use language with greater maturity than that now used in current reading books; therefore, some experimentation is needed to discover whether or not the discrepancy need be so great. Stories for children should be written so that each sentence adds something to the story and is not a repetition for word pronunciation. Many first grade children are very bored with the beginning reading materials and are frank and accurate in their appraisal of them.

Children's reports of their activities are a mine of ideas regarding the kinds of situations and things with which children can identify. The primer with the largest vocabulary was examined to determine the situations which had been de-

veloped into stories. The general situations were those of interest to children. For example, a boy demonstrated to his father his new skill of standing on his head. However, the "new thing" the girl could do had to be inferred from the picture, and it was too simple to be representative of the new skills six-year-olds are acquiring. The same indictment may be made of the next situation where the children build a train of blocks that could be built by any three-year-old. Continued analysis of this particular primer, and a more cursory analysis of the others, led to the conclusion that the activities portrayed were familiar to children but were developed on a level two to three years below the children's present experiences.

It has been noted previously that the range of subjects and objects utilized by the readers were much more limited than children's experiences; in fact, it has been pointed out that there is a tendency to stereotype the content of readers, probably because the use of word lists tend to over-emphasize certain words, particularly nouns. Children's experiences encompass a great many things. Cookies, cakes, and ice cream are not the only foods children know and enjoy.

The greatest difference between the language employed by children and the manner in which they use it and the language employed by the beginning books is found in the dynamics of the former. The relationships and feelings, the ongoingness of experience is so often missing in the books. Things happen in a sort of vacuum. Surely, publishing companies that have done so much to improve instructional materials can take this next step in the

(Continued on Page 495)

# Research and Interpretation

## TEACHERS' MEMORIES AND OPINIONS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Teachers' memories of books they have read as children are of scientific and practical interest. They represent one area of childhood memories, a topic insufficiently studied by research techniques. They also represent a possible influence on the teacher's selection of materials and methods in literature. Psychoanalysts, notably Freud, have stressed the unconscious influences of childhood experiences upon adult behavior. More psychologists would probably accept the possibility that conscious materials remembered from childhood may be significantly related to later behavior. The fact that pleasant memories constituted about fifty per cent of the total, unpleasant memories about thirty percent, and neutral memories about twenty per cent in one more general investigation<sup>1</sup> of adults' memories of childhood experiences supports the desirability of studies of memories of children's books.

Over the past several years, 680 in-service and pre-service teachers in the present study recorded a few of their reactions to children's books. After one or two hours' introduction to the field of juvenile literature in a university class which included discussion of a number of children's books without a systematic listing of specific titles, they were asked to write the titles of three books in each of three categories: "My Three Favorite Books as a Child," "The Three Best Children's Books Now" and "The Three Most Popular Children's Books Now." In addition, at a later date, some of the group wrote one to three paragraphs on "What———Meant to Me

as a Child" with the blank being filled by a title of their choice which was among the favorites listed by the whole group. For purposes of this experiment childhood was defined as any age up to twelve years. For each of these tasks the teachers were asked not to think too long or too carefully. It was suggested that they give their first impressions and memories rather than attempting a detailed analysis of feelings or striving to make subtle comparisons. Accordingly, the study deals with teachers' uppermost memories and impressions of children's literature, rather than making an exhaustive analysis of reactions.

The first impression obtained from tabulating the teachers' choices is one found in many studies of children's interests in reading, the wide range of titles mentioned in each of the categories. Altogether, the 680 teachers listed approximately 600 different titles in the three categories. The range was widest in the listing of "My Three Favorite Books as a Child" with 334 titles. The choices for the "Three Best Children's Books Now" included 310 titles, and the "Three Most Popular Books Now" 266 titles. The range was smaller in the third category because many teachers felt unable to list three books that were "most popular" with children today. In each semester the teachers, especially the pre-service group, seemed surer of their own memories of books than of their judgments of current children's books.

The books listed in each of the categories by ten or more teachers are given in Tables I, II, and III. These include 40 titles in Table I, 37 titles in Table II, and 30 titles in Table III. The predominance of girls' books in Table I, such as *Little Women*, *Heidi*, *Rebecca of*

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Waldfogel, "The Frequency and Affective Character of Childhood Memories," *Psychological Monographs*, 62, No. 4, 1948.

*Sunnybrook Farm, the little Colonel*, and *Anne of Green Gables* reflects the composition of the group studied, a group of elementary school teachers in which the women far outnumbered the men. This list corroborates an earlier finding of Terman and Lima<sup>2</sup> of books recalled most easily by women. In their study titles mentioned most frequently were *Little Women*, *The Little Colonel* books, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Black Beauty*. In the present study *Little Women*, *Heidi*, and *Alice in Wonderland* maintain their places of prominence in the lists of "best books now" and "most popular books now", but the omission of the other "old favorites" indicates changing tastes or standards. They are replaced by some newer girls' books, such as *Caddie Woodlawn* and *Hitty*, but these are not ranked as highly as certain of the older and more general classics, such as *Tom Sawyer*, *Black Beauty*, the Mother Goose rhymes, and some of the fairy tales. The only recent "classic" appearing prominently on all three lists is *Winnie the Pooh* but *Bambi*, the *Just-So Stories*, *Mary Poppins*, *Millions of Cats*, *Little Black Sambo*, *Dr. Dolittle*, and *Smoky* are newer books rated as both good and popular, which seem to have risen in the teacher's esteem or to have been mentioned as desirable "modern" books not read or enjoyed in childhood.

Table I offers considerable support for the definition of a children's classic as a book children remember. Out of all the books they read children seem to remember the good ones. The forty books listed as favorites years ago still represent a sample of generally approved children's books. Some objections may be raised by the conscientious teacher or librarian to the Oz books (as distinguished from *The Wizard of Oz*), the Little Colonel series, the different twin series the Nancy Drew series, the Elsie Dinsmore series, and *The Girl of the Limber-*

*lost*. Also, at different times, certain writers have objected to some ideas in *Heidi*, in *Swiss Family Robinson*, and in *Little Black Sambo*, but in general the books listed are on approved lists for children today. For example, half the forty books in Table I are given in a highly selected list of 59 children's books compiled by the Cleveland Public Library Staff.<sup>3</sup> Whatever they read in childhood, these teachers tend to remember books still regarded as good literature. This may be some comfort to the individual teacher in encouraging her to share with children books she herself enjoyed in her own childhood.

### *The Influence of Childhood Reading*

The continuing influence of childhood reading is also evident in the three lists. In considering the overlapping of the first thirty titles in each list of the favorites in childhood, two-thirds reappear in the "best" list and about one-half in the "most popular" list today. Evidently teachers believe that books they enjoyed most in childhood are still among the best and most popular books for children. This assumption may indicate a lack of knowledge of newer children's books or a belief that what was good enough for a previous generation of children is good enough for the present one. In a random sample of the individual lists, there was at least one overlap in titles between two of the three categories in 58 per cent of the lists submitted. Twenty-eight per cent of the group included a title from the childhood favorite list in the "best today" list and twenty-two per cent included a title from the three titles of the childhood list in the "most popular today" list. In view of the enormous number of juvenile titles published in the last fifteen years, these figures further validate the hypothesis that teachers react favorably to books they themselves have enjoyed as children.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lima, *Children's Reading*, Appleton-Century, 1935.

<sup>3</sup>"Books Every Child Should Know", *Journal of National Education Association* 29: 281, 282, December, 1940.



The lists in Tables I and II do not show marked trends in regard to particular types of story material. It is difficult to know what a book will mean to an individual child in any case, and in many of the titles listed various elements are mixed: Such themes as family life, fairy tales and fantasy, adventure, and animal life seem to be included in approximately equal amounts in best-liked books of childhood and titles recommended today. The list in Table II is not open to specific criticism because the teachers were not asked to record their opinions of best books for different age levels and, accordingly, the teachers' ability to gauge suitability of the books for different levels cannot be determined. The list includes, however, books usually recommended for young children as well as others usually selected for older children.

### *Influences or Effects of Childhood Reading*

In addition to investigating teachers' memories and opinions of the titles of books read in childhood and later, this study attempts to discover some possible values of childhood reading as determined by adult reactions. The total influence of a book on a child's development can never be evaluated in terms of his adult memories of the book, but there is some reason to believe that highly significant reactions to a story will be remembered longer than less significant experiences. If an adult remembers certain parts or effects of a book read as a child, it may be argued that these passages or effects were fairly important influences on his development during childhood and adolescence. Accordingly, this study analyzes a group of teachers' reports on "What ——— Meant to Me as a Child," with the blank

<sup>4</sup>David H. Russell, "Research on Reading Difficulties and Personality Adjustment," *Improving Educational Research*, pp. 10-13. 1948, official report, American Educational Research Association, 1948.

indicating a self-chosen title popular with the whole group in childhood (See Table I).

The research literature on the positive effects of reading is meager.<sup>4</sup> Waples and others<sup>5</sup> have stated reasons given by adults for their reading as adults. These include such effects as "respite from emotional tensions," "relief of inferiority feelings," "fuller knowledge of a practical problem," or "reinforcement or development of an attitude toward controversial issues." In the only other study known to the writer of adult reactions to childhood reading, Lind<sup>6</sup> used written documents and interviews with thirty adults in an attempt to determine effects of reading in childhood on the development of personality. She believes that the adults divided themselves into four groups in terms of the ways they used reading: (1) reading used as escape... use of fantasy, (2) reading used as temporary diversion... some degree of identification, (3) reading used as an organizing influence on personality, and (4) reading used to help in objective interests and tasks. Lind believes that "the child or adult reads with attention only literature which answers to some need or accords with one's own self-expressive activities." She finds further that "Reading influences attitudes only if the reader is able to make personal identifications and only if he can sustain his new attitudes in some group."

An analysis of the reports of one hundred teachers randomly selected from the larger group used in the present study fails to verify any clear-cut division into four or any other

<sup>5</sup>Douglas Waples, Bernard Berelson, and Franklin Bradshaw, *What Reading Does to People*, University of Chicago Press, 1940. Also Douglas Waples, "The Social Influences of Reading," in *Reading and Child Development* (W. S. Gray, comp. and ed) Supplementary Educational Monographs No. 51, University of Chicago Press, 1940.

<sup>6</sup>Katherine N. Lind, "The Social Psychology of Children's Reading," *American Journal of Sociology* 41:454-469, January, 1936.

number of types of readers on the basis of the effects of reading in childhood. Although the group were asked to give only their quick first impressions, they typically mentioned two or three values the reading of a favorite book had for them. (A few gave merely a list of incidents in the story which they remembered, without any suggestion of psychological or other values.) The analysis of the written reports is necessarily subjective, since the values or effects of reading may be stated by implication as well as directly. Some eighteen values stated by five or more teachers in the group of one hundred are listed in descending order of frequency in Table IV. This list is obviously an overlapping one. Identification and wish-fulfillment may operate together, escape and enjoyment of fantasy may coincide, and similarly other items on the list are not mutually exclusive. They are stated here in separate categories because they were stated explicitly this way in the reports analyzed. However, the totals given include implicit as well as explicit mention of a value or effect.

Since certain statements were open to interpretation, not much weight should be attached to specific scores of frequency of occurrence of certain items in the analysis. An exception may be the predominant place given to identification while reading *Heidi*, *Little Women*, *Tom Sawyer*, and other books listed in Table I. The frequency of the second item, "Enjoyment of Humor, Adventure, etc." would undoubtedly be higher, since these are favorite books, except that explicit mention of it was required before it was recorded in the analysis.

The list indicates that a group of teachers got many benefits from reading as children, or think they got many such benefits. While it is dangerous to recombine such a subjective list, the values and effects of the reading seem to fall into five large categories (and possibly additional smaller ones). In order of frequency of mention, these categories seem to be (i)

identification with characters of the story or poem, (ii) emotional responses such as often involved in identification but also including enjoyment of humor and adventure, response to fantasy, and arousal of emotions stated explicitly, as sadness, fear, etc., (iii) contributions to overt actions such as dramatic play, enrichment of everyday experiences, increased knowledge, understanding of human relationships and improved reading abilities (iv) escape, such as in enjoyment of fantasy, wish-fulfillment, appeal to imagination, (v) specific reactions to details in books such as facts given, illustrations, name of author, and characters described.

In classifying the teachers' responses into five main categories, it must be reaffirmed that the individuals varied widely in their choices of books and in their reports on what these books meant to them as children. Some teachers described a variety of psychological values; others mentioned one or none. An example of an articulate response suggesting several effects was the following:

Although I cannot be sure of the year, I believe that I was nine or ten years old when I read *Heidi* for the first time. I can remember the delicious thrill of identifying with Heidi until I was she... out in the mountains with Peter and the goats, going to sleep in the loft of hay under the eaves and seeing the sky out of the little window; and the warm, safe feeling of sitting in the kitchen eating bread and cheese and drinking fresh goat's milk.

I suppose among other things this identification acted as an escape for me from the everyday world. I read avidly and our family entered into the spirit of what we did. In this case, my mother bought big leaves of French bread and showed us how to tear off chunks and sitting in the kitchen eating this bread and butter and drinking coca was also Heidi to me. Reading the book meant absorbing new experiences and taking them for my own, it meant giving our family more information and background for our play

life, which was often of this imaginary type.

This book also gave me sympathy for Clara...for invalids who are confined, and further developed my idea that living simply outdoors and among close friends was the way to be happy. The austerity of the huge city house held little appeal compared with the smell and feel of the warm hay-bed and Christmas among real friends. Perhaps my set was already in this direction, but *Heidi*, as well as many other books about "the simple life" such as "The Good Master" and others by Kate Seredy were the ones that gave me the feeling of warmth and security and happiness that I wanted...and for that matter, still do.

In contrast to the number of values mentioned above, some teachers remembered only one possible effect of a book on them. For example, one wrote a rather clear-cut illustration of a child's wish fulfillment:

The book I remember most vividly was *Ozma of Oz*. The reaction I had was not to the book as a whole but to just one character...the Princess with 20 heads.

This Princess could unscrew her head and replace it with any one of nineteen others at any time. As her head would change, so would her complete character and personality change. I thought this a wonderful feat. I often wished that I could do the same.

### Summary and Conclusions

The titles mentioned by 680 in-service and pre-service elementary school teachers of three books most enjoyed as children and short reports on what a favorite book meant to them as children serve as an introductory study of the values of reading juvenile literature. A few conclusions and implications may be derived from the analysis of these data:

For most of this group, the reading of some juvenile book in childhood was a significant, well-remembered experience. Many stated they could no longer recall details of stories but still

recalled the thrill, the fun or other emotional reactions as they first read a book and as they reread it.

The books most enjoyed by this group when children range in title and content. Although the group was a relatively homogeneous one of college people teaching or planning to teach in the elementary school, they listed 334 titles in "My three favorite books as a child." *Little Women* and *Heidi* were almost universal favorites but other titles showed a wide variety. It seems almost impossible to predict what will be a "best" book for any child or similar group of children today.

There is considerable overlap in titles between this group's listing of "My three favorite books as a child" and each of the two lists "The three best children's books now" and "The three most popular children's books now." What is read and enjoyed in childhood may affect one's judgment of what children should read and do read now.

This group of pre-service and in-service teachers seemed much surer of their three favorite books as children than of their opinions about best and most popular children's books today. Most teachers, especially the pre-service group, probably profit from opportunities to extend their acquaintance with modern children's books. A few of the group seemed to know such titles as *Little Women*, *Black Beauty*, and *Tom Sawyer*, but no modern children's books. Over half of the most frequently mentioned "best books today" were older classics rather than titles first published in the last ten or fifteen years.

Children's classics may be defined as books they remember. The list of titles in "my favorite books as a child" contains many books still regarded as good books by librarians and others.

If the reading of a book was a significant experience at the time, remembered for many years, the question of what kind of influence or effect resulted from the reading is an important

one. A random sample of one hundred reports from the group had eighteen different influences or effects of reading described by five or more teachers. These may be subjectively classified into five main types in order of frequency: (i) identification with characters in the story or poem, (ii) various emotional responses, (iii) contributions to overt activities, especially dramatic play, (iv) escape, and (v) specific reactions to details in books, such as an illustration.

The reports indicate that this group of teachers does not divide itself into sub-groups in terms of influences or effects of reading. Rather, a book may mean different things to different children and a number of different things to the same child.

Certain implications for the work of elementary teachers may be suggested. These have long been the practice of good teachers but the research support for them has been meager. Teachers should arrange situations so that children may identify themselves easily with desirable characters.<sup>7</sup> Since emotional responses are long remembered, they should plan frequent use of the group situation, involving heightened emotional response, in addition to individual opportunities for enjoying literature. The school situation should facilitate transfer of ideas found in literature to dramatic play and other related experiences. Teachers may be certain of some mental health values in recreational reading but cannot be equally sure of these for all members of a group. The teacher should share with a group stories she remembers liking as a child ... but also take steps to become acquainted with newer juvenile literature.<sup>8</sup> The present study does not give full evidence in favor of

these and other common practices of good teachers but suggests, perhaps, a few other research studies that should be undertaken in the fields of childhood memories and influences of literature.

TABLE I  
FREQUENCY OF TITLES MENTIONED  
TEN TIMES OR MORE BY 680 TEACHERS  
IN LISTING  
"MY THREE FAVORITE BOOKS  
AS A CHILD"

Little Women.....	208
Heidi.....	150
Tom Sawyer.....	78
Black Beauty.....	72
Alice in Wonderland.....	68
Grimm's Fairy Tales.....	59
Oz Books.....	52
Winnie the Pooh.....	39
Treasure Island.....	38
Child's Garden of Verses.....	37
Five Little Peppers and How They Grew..	31
Robinson Crusoe.....	30
Andersen's Fairy Tales.....	25
Arabian Nights.....	23
Wizard of Oz.....	23
Mother Goose.....	23
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.....	22
Peter Pan.....	20
Little Colonel.....	20
Pinocchio.....	20
Dr. Dolittle.....	20
Twin Series (Perkins).....	19
Swiss Family Robinson.....	19
Robin Hood.....	19
Anne of Green Gables.....	18
Little Black Sambo.....	18
Bobbsey Twin Books.....	18
Peter Rabbit.....	18
Fairy Tales (general).....	16
Secret Garden.....	16
Little Men.....	15
Bambi.....	14
Hitty.....	14
Nancy Drew Series.....	13

<sup>7</sup>David H. Russell, "Identification Through Literature," *Childhood Education* 25:397-401, May, 1949.

<sup>8</sup>Eunice K. Crabtree, "A Study of the Effect of a Course in Children's Literature Upon Student's Own Literary Appreciation," Washington, D. C.; Judd and Detweiler, 1932.



Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates.....	12	Smoky.....	13
Huckleberry Finn.....	12	Noisy Books.....	13
Elsie Dinsmore.....	11	Babar.....	13
Girl of the Limberlost.....	11	Disney books.....	12
Gulliver's Travels.....	10	Oz books.....	10

TABLE II  
FREQUENCY OF TITLES MENTIONED  
TEN TIMES OR MORE BY 680 TEACHERS  
IN LISTING  
"THE THREE BEST CHILDREN'S  
BOOKS NOW"

Winnie the Pooh.....	96
Little Women.....	88
Tom Sawyer.....	84
Bambi.....	64
Alice in Wonderland.....	60
Heidi.....	56
Treasure Island.....	44
Mother Goose.....	38
Black Beauty.....	38
Just- So Stories.....	37
Make Way for the Ducklings.....	37
Child's Garden of Verses.....	28
Grimm's Fairy Tales.....	25
Mary Poppins.....	24
Millions of Cats.....	20
Robinson Crusoe.....	20
Little Black Sambo.....	18
Pinocchio.....	18
Robin Hood.....	18
Tall Mother Goose.....	17
Wind in the Willows.....	17
Ping.....	16
Caddie Woodlawn.....	16
Hitty.....	15
Andersen's Fairy Tales.....	15
Arabian Nights.....	14
Peter Pan.....	14
Dr. Dolittle.....	14
The Jungle Books.....	13
Huckleberry Finn.....	13
Peter Rabbit.....	13
Twin Series (Perkins).....	13

TABLE III  
FREQUENCY OF TITLES MENTIONED  
TEN TIMES OR MORE BY 680  
TEACHERS IN LISTING  
"THE THREE MOST POPULAR  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS NOW"

Bambi.....	87
Tom Sawyer.....	63
Mother Goose.....	46
Winnie the Pooh.....	46
Little Women.....	45
Heidi.....	32
Little Black Sambo.....	32
Millions of Cats.....	31
Smoky.....	30
Black Beauty.....	28
Mary Poppins.....	27
Alice in Wonderland.....	23
Lassie Come Home.....	22
Grimm's Fairy Tales.....	20
Pinocchio.....	19
Just-So Stories.....	18
Dr. Dolittle.....	16
Golden Book Series.....	16
Babar.....	15
Disney books.....	15
Make Way for the Ducklings.....	15
Oz books.....	15
Huckleberry Finn.....	13
Madeline.....	11
Ping.....	11
My Friend Flicka.....	11
Ferdinand the Bull.....	10
The Good Master.....	10
Nancy Drew Stories.....	10
The Three Bears.....	10
Tall Mother Goose.....	10

TABLE IV  
VALUES AND PROCESSES  
REPORTED BY 100 TEACHERS  
AS A RESULT OF READING  
A BOOK IN CHILDHOOD

	<i>Frequency of Mention</i>
Identification with character (s).....	46
Enjoyment of Humor, Adventure, etc. (stated explicitly).....	20
Enrichment of everyday experiences.....	18
Enjoyment of fantasy.....	17
Imitation of activities (in dramatic play) ..	17
Added knowledge - facts, etc.....	15
Increased understanding of human relationships.....	14
Wish-fulfillment.....	14

Escape and relaxation.....	12
Appeal to imagination.....	10
Appreciation of character.....	10
Arousal of emotions - sadness, suspense, etc.	10
Encouragement to read more (by same author).....	9
Enjoyment of illustrations.....	9
Development of general interests and abilities in reading.....	8
Increased understanding of other children..	7
Added liking for animals.....	6
Helped in general personality adjustments.	5

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#### LOOK FOR VISUAL READINESS

In America, most individuals go through at least the elementary school. Many people spend twenty-five percent of their lives in school and college. Thus school problems, and visual problems associated with them, are important. They are most important in the first grade, because that is usually the start of the child's school experience. It represents a major change in his social environment and way of life, poses new and difficult problems socially, psychologically, and physically, and establishes habits and attitudes which will affect him as long as he lives. Since much of his learning comes from books, the child's success in school, usually right from the start, depends upon a new and strange factor ...the ability to read.

Recent research shows that the first grade may be a very difficult experience both emotionally and physically. The child must learn to become a social member of the group. Sometimes, depending on home and pre-school experience, this is a very difficult problem.

The child in most school systems today is forced into a pattern of restricted physical activity, enforced quiet, and more or less prolonged near-point activity. Children are re-

quired to enter school by law at a chronological age of from around five and one-half to a few months over six years, depending on the state and the accidents of birthday and the date of the opening of school. Maturation, the child's individual state of mental and physical development, has nothing to do with it. Most schools stress reading in the first grade. Many schools start right out with "readers," in the form of books, to be used at near point. Many children are neither physically, mentally, or emotionally ready for this type of activity at their age of admission to school and are, therefore, doomed to excessive and fatiguing effort, nervous frustration, induced visual difficulties, or the stigma of failure, through no fault whatsoever of their own. Over two thirds of 150 unselected first grade children (the entire first grades of three schools of quite diverse economic and home background) tested by the writers were found to be either visually defective or too immature to engage in prolonged near-point work.

Psychologists agree that a child should have a mental age of about six and one-half years to be ready to read. As children develop at varying rates, and over rather wide limits, most first-grade children have neither reached mental nor

visual maturity adequate for reading. Kerr<sup>1</sup> tested 217 children at the first-grade level, and found 70 percent with reduced visual acuity, 33 percent with muscular imbalance, 28 percent with faulty fusion, and practically all with enlarged non-receptive areas around the optic nerve head. Another group of 37, age five years and six months to five years and eleven months, showed 73 percent with subnormal visual acuity, 56 percent with lateral muscular imbalances, 18 percent with faulty fusion, and 97 percent with enlarged blind spots.

Wolf<sup>2</sup> has found that part of the accommodative mechanism, Muller's muscle, is entirely absent at birth and that the ciliary muscle of accommodation takes on its triangular form only after the fifth year, and is not fully developed until about the seventh. Duke-Elder<sup>3</sup> publishes a table showing the growth of the lens of the normal eye from the fourth month to old age. It is significant that growth continues until about the twelfth year, and then does not change until the onset of presbyopia, at around forty to forty-five. The eye ball itself seems to reach its total adult diameter much earlier in life, probably before school age. However, there is continued growth and development of the posterior portion of the globe, symmetry improves, and there are relative changes in the position of the optic axis. The full duration of this period of development, and its visual implications, are apparently subject to further research.

Whitnall<sup>4</sup>, an English anatomist, did some interesting and significant research on the development of the human orbit, the bony case

surrounding the eye ball. He found that the orbit is not fully developed until the age of puberty, that it approaches final dimensions at around age twelve, but that most measurements definitely differ at age six.

He stresses the close relationship of the growth of the orbit with that of the brain, whose frontal lobe rests upon the lamina cribrosa of the ethmoid bone, an important part of the orbital structure. He also calls attention to effects of the development of the upper jaw, the teeth, the widening of the distance between the eyes, development of the entire and intricate structure of the nasal accessory sinuses. It requires little imagination to realize what all this means in the development of the child's oculo-muscular coordination and the difficulties of fine fixation and prolonged near-point convergence.

Whitmall also notes that if the eye ball is removed before the full development of the orbit is complete, further development is checked. "The orbit conforms to the law of adaptation of the organ to the function which it is called upon to perform." This would indicate continued growth of the eye ball and its musculature until puberty.

Park and Burri<sup>5</sup> examined a group of over 60 first graders and found 59 percent with less than normal visual acuity as compared with 54 percent of the second graders, and as low as 20 percent in the higher grades. It is particularly significant that most of the older children were correctable to normal by lenses, but only one-third of the younger ones, showing that the problem was one of maturation, not defect.

<sup>4</sup>S. Ernest Whitmall. "Anatomy of the Human Orbit." *Oxford Medical Publications*. Henry Frowde and Hodder and Stoughton. London, 1921. p. 96.

<sup>5</sup>George E. Park and Clara Burri. "Eye Maturation and Reading Difficulties." *The Journal of Educational Psychology*. December, 1943, Volume 34, p. 542.

<sup>1</sup>Clara Kerr, "Visual Maturity at the First Grade Level." Claremont College Reading Conference, 11th Yearbook, 1946, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Eugene Wolf. *The Anatomy of the Eye and Orbit*. Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1940. p. 316.

<sup>3</sup>Duke-Elder, W. Stewart. *Textbook of Ophthalmology*. C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1934, Volume I, p. 120.

Most children are born hyperopic, or far sighted. The eye is like a camera that is too short for the focal length of the lens, but unlike the camera it can, by an effort and some time a very strenuous one, put itself in focus and see clearly. Also unlike a camera it changes itself by this effort, sometimes to its own detriment. As the child grows, the eye ball and the lens of the eye grow, and the far sightedness decreases to a negligible amount. Far-sightedness in a child is normal. Zoethout<sup>6</sup> investigated 300 infants and found them all hyperopic from 1 to 8 diopters. Farsightedness of over  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  diopter in adults doing close work in a modern civilization is a handicap, causing excessive strain, tension, and fatigue. It is also a handicap to children in the lower grades if they are forced into excessive close work. It causes excessive fatigue, strain, nervousness, and irritability and further complicates the teaching problem and the already difficult social adjustment from home and family to school and group.

The individual is an adaptive organism. It tries to conform to its environment. The intelligent, willing child usually makes the greatest effort to meet the standards set for him. This merely hastens his development from hyperopia to emmetropia, or from farsightedness to normal focus. The serious part of the process is that it may not stop when the normal is reached but continue on to a better adaption to near-point work - nearsightedness or myopia. Unfortunately the process is hastened by over-anxious, too conscientious, and non-understanding parents and teachers.

Zoethout<sup>7</sup>, discussing myopia in children, states, "As most children are born hyperopic, it is evident that myopia is generally not congenital. The causes leading to myopia are twofold; a weakness of the tunics of the eye, and excessive near work." He cites evidence showing that primitive peoples are seldom myopic, "W. D. Zoethout. "Physiological Optics." *The Professional Press*, Chicago, 1935, p. 81.

while the prevalence of myopia among civilized people appears to be proportionate to the amount of near work they do. He finds an increase in one group of students of from 15 percent myopia at age ten and eleven to 60 percent at the ages of eighteen and nineteen; 40 percent of university students are myopic; and an increase of 400 percent in the incidence of myopia in a group of 3078 scholars from the fifth to the thirteenth grades.

While the above figures may seem high, many observing eye men in practice can testify to the alarming increase in myopia as the near-point load increases during the school years. Additional evidence of a relationship between visual trouble and increase in near work is furnished by the great number of returning service men who experienced no visual difficulties whatsoever at sea, in the field, or in the air and were discharged with 20/20 vision, only to seek help for headaches, strain, and loss of distant vision (myopia) soon after resuming the grind of school or office. The experience of certain types of hosiery workers - girls brought into the factories and put on jobs requiring the close watching of moving thread very close to the eye for long periods of time daily - is well known to eye specialists. Here a girl almost has to become a myopic to remain on the job, and it is said her success and the amount of money in her pay envelope is measured by her nearsightedness.

Zoethout<sup>8</sup>, in further discussion of myopia, admits that the manner in which it is induced by near work is not clear, but that "the steady fixation of the eyes required for near work, necessitating the constant contraction of all the external eye muscles, may cause a deformation of an eye whose sclera (fibrous shell) is not sufficiently rigid to withstand the strain." He then quotes the famous Gullstrand - "in continuous accommodation a force is at work

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 82-83.



which, with the growth of the eye tends to lower the refraction.... And supposing the steady accommodation that goes on in the hyperopic eye of a child is a process of regulation inducing emmetropic (normal) refraction, may it not likewise be possible that an excessive accommodation strain tends to promote myopia?" Whatever the cause, the result is a child seriously handicapped in many forms of play. One sixth-grade teacher told the writers about his star pupil, a wonderful reader who had become so myopic he couldn't ride his bicycle to school any more because he could not see well enough to get along in traffic. One can imagine him dropping out of the school-yard gang, giving up outdoor games and friends for books, and drawing more and more into himself.

There is another solution to the problem. In some children the accommodative, or focus, effort carries with it an excessive amount of convergence. If this becomes too severe, and the effort to see singly and clearly with both eyes too great, Johnny soon learns to suppress the vision of one eye, let it turn in, and just use the other one. This is easier, and it gets still easier as time goes on. The eye turns farther in out of the way, and the vision, from lack of use, becomes worse and worse.

The prevalence of visual problems in the higher grades is shown by a survey of 1685 pupils in the seventh grade in the public schools of Oakland, California, in 1936. 739, or 44 percent, were found to have eye defects of varying degree. How many of these are due to excessive close work in the earlier grades is an open question, but a most provocative one in the light of Farris<sup>9</sup> further analysis. He states that hyperopia is associated with less than normal reading progress, while myopes show

more than average progress; also that pupils with monocular visual perception are better readers than those using both eyes but without correct binocular coordination.

Visual defects are as prevalent among children of the higher economic levels as in underprivileged areas. Sloane<sup>10</sup> reports 20 percent of 715 preparatory school boys from the most privileged homes and high economic background had subnormal vision in both eyes, 25 percent in one eye, and that 10 percent of those requiring glasses due to hyperopia of a sufficiently high degree to constitute a reading handicap did not have them.

Emotionally, the failure of educators and parents to realize the importance of gearing the child's learning program to his state of maturational progress has still further complicated an already difficult problem. Gesell and Ilg report, after exhaustive study of children, that "The Sixth year (or thereabouts) brings fundamental changes, somatic and psychological. It is an age of transition. The milk teeth are shedding; the first permanent molars are emerging. Even the child's body chemistry undergoes subtle changes reflected in increased susceptibility to infectious diseases. Otitis media comes to a peak; nose and throat difficulties rise in frequency. The six-year old is not as robust nor as staunch as he was at five. There are other important developmental changes which affect the mechanisms of vision, and indeed the whole neuro-motor system."<sup>11</sup>

They also point out that "Parents, teachers, and school administrators may be unaware of the complexity of factors both inherent and environmental which can undermine the morale

"A Summary of Findings of the Eye Examination of Preparatory School Boys." *American Journal of Ophthalmology*. Vol. 26. No. 10., October, 1943.

<sup>11</sup>Arnold Gesell and Frances Ilg. *The Child From Five to Ten*. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946. p. 89.

<sup>9</sup>Lucien C. Farris. "Visual Defects as Factors In fluencing Achievements in Reading." University of California. 1936. (Thesis).

<sup>10</sup>Albert E. Sloane and J. Roswell Gallagher.

of a school beginner. Sometimes the transition to school is so blundering that it produces gastro-intestinal symptoms and immature children suffer most. . . . tensions are so abnormally weighted against the child that his mental health is over taxed."<sup>12</sup>

In view of such data, it is understandable that from 8 percent to 40 percent of all children fail to "pass" at the first grade level in many school systems, an average of from 25 to 33 percent missing promotion to the second grade largely on the basis of reading progress. As Betts says, "Children are failing to meet the adult standards set for them."<sup>13</sup> It is real tragedy that Center finds "20 to 33 percent of boys and girls in elementary and high schools fail to achieve the reading standards of their grades."<sup>14</sup> As she further points out, this results in reading failure, school failure, truancy, delinquency; with an estimated 50 percent of delinquents being illiterate. To her statement that "A child is not ready to read until mentally mature enough to translate little black marks on white paper into concepts identified with experiences," could be added "and until he can focus those little dots clearly, singly with both eyes working together and without excessive strain or fatigue."

The problem has been stated. The solution remains to be worked out. Certainly a great deal more understanding is required on the part of parents and educators, accompanied by the immediate breaking with the long-established tradition of reading out of books at near point for all children in the first grade.

Adequate screening tests, or better still complete physical and psychological visual ex-

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>13</sup>Emmett A. Betts. *Foundations of Reading Instruction*. American Book Company, New York, 1946. p. 29.

<sup>14</sup>Stella S. Center. "The Instructional Aspects of the Reading Clinic Program." Proceedings of the Spring Conference on Education and the Exceptional Child of the Child Research Clinic of the Woods Schools, May, 1946.

aminations, should be given every child entering school for the first time, with adequate checks during his school career. All sources of interference to learning which are possible of elimination should be eliminated. These include problems of general health, nutrition, sanitation, vision, hearing, infections such as teeth, tonsils, and sinuses, and the avoidable emotional upsets of school and home. And school progress and school tasks, particularly visual, must be geared to the child's level of maturity, not hide-bound adult standards.

The vision specialist, with his understanding of the development of the visual mechanism and its problems, can be of great help to the child, the parent, and the teacher. He must spend ample time in discussion of the problems with the parent, write or phone an adequate report to the teacher to insure her intelligent cooperation, and be as quick to prescribe a reduction of near-point work for the immature child with more gross distance activity and future observation, as he is to use lenses or training procedures.

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#### CONTINUITY IN READING INSTRUCTION

The concept of continuity has long been recognized as a *sine qua non* of effective reading instruction. However, emphasis has constantly been placed upon teaching methods and reading materials, whereas not enough attention has been given to continuity of the learning process. Reading series have long recognized the desirability of controlled introduction of vocabulary, sentence structure, concepts, and experience. Manuals stress the need of drawing upon past experience for building new concepts and developing skills. Over-all plans in teachers' plan books make provision for frequent reviews

to provide for continuity in the teaching program. Teachers consult with one another to ensure selection of proper materials to extend and deepen experience. Principals plan with teachers and teachers take courses to develop a school-wide program to which all concerned may make appropriate and opportune contributions. A modern reading program needs such planning and materials, but they are preliminary to, not the sum total of, making instruction continuous. For even though the philosophy of instruction be sound and the materials and methods be logically and psychologically organized, they are worthless unless they make *learning* possible for the individual child. As a matter of fact, the test of continuity in a reading program lies in whether the child learns what is planned in the program of reading. The question, then, that the teacher should ask herself is this: "Is my program of reading instruction continuous for each child in my classroom?" The program, I repeat, must be continuous not only from the point of view of the teacher but more necessarily and especially from the point of view of the child.

#### *Recognizing Individual Differences*

In answering the question posited in the preceding paragraph, the teacher must realize the extent to which individuals differ both one from another and within themselves. Research has revealed that "when a random group of 6-year-olds enter the first grade, 2% will be below the average 4-year-olds in general mental development and 2% will be above the average eight-year-olds. Disregarding the extreme 2% at either end, there is a 4-year range in intelligence. By the time this group has reached the age of 12 (sixth-grade level) the range will have increased to almost eight years. . . . . When the educational achievement of a typical sixth-grade class is measured we find a range of approximately eight years in reading comprehension, vocabulary, arithmetic reasoning, mechanics of English composition and other forms of achievement. In almost any sixth grade

class will be found a pupil with second grade reading ability and another with tenth-grade ability."

Moreover, ".....trait variability in the typical individual is 80% as great as individual variability in his age group, trait differences are normally distributed, some individuals are twice as variable as others, and there is no relationship between general level of ability and the amount of trait variability."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the teacher must become as thoroughly acquainted with each child as she possibly can. A study of performance or lack of it on achievement and diagnostic tests, conferences with the children, interviews with parents and observation of behavior during the whole school day are several means of *learning* the child, as Betts puts it. A careful study of a child is eminently necessary because reading requires cerebration and the development of skills as well as acquiring and memorizing information and symbols. A knowledge of what the child knows and can do and of what he must master to enable him to engage successfully in an activity is indispensable for effective teaching. It is unquestionable that many children fail chiefly because of the failure of teachers to accept study of the individual child as the necessary preliminary to effective instruction. More often than not the onus of learning is placed upon the child, with the result that if the child does not learn what the teacher expects, he is deemed stupid.

Unless the teacher knows specifically what the child lacks when she plans to develop a reading skill, her instruction, no matter how well intentioned and planned, and the materials, even of the highest quality, are haphazard at best. And the fact that some children do learn is fortunate; yet the methodology may be and very often is uneconomical both for the teacher and the pupil.

<sup>1</sup>Walter W. Cook, "Individual Differences and Curriculum Practice," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, March, 1948.

### *Importance of Readiness*

Development of readiness especially requires continuous learning on the part of the child. It is often lack of continuity that makes true learning impossible and what eventuates may be confusion or verbalizing. During his early reading experiences the child should understand what he is doing and master the recognition of words that he will meet when he reads them in his preprimer or primer. When a child has been absent, the teacher should realize that a gap exists in the child's academic experience and that it is her responsibility to ensure possession by the child of those experiences, words, and concepts that will permit him to read with his group without failure and possible embarrassment or frustration. Of course if the child is being taught individually, this caution need not be sounded unless the teacher has previously set up a schedule which she is determined to meet. In this situation the teacher should realize that the important consideration is not the amount of material that can be covered but rather the growth of the child. Consequently irrespective of the pattern of instruction used, continuous growth depends very largely upon a knowledge of the child.

As the child progresses through school, the necessity of making continuity of learning the basis of the instructional program becomes quite obvious.

### *Developing the Skills*

The learning of word-attack skills provides adequate and pointed illustration of the necessity of continuity. The realization that words are made up of component parts called sounds in spoken language is difficult for some children to grasp. Moreover, some teachers fail to provide children with preparatory experiences that help to develop this concept. As early as in the kindergarten the child should learn the component sounds of his name and familiar objects in his environment. Teachers manuals contain many helpful suggestions.



Moreover, some teachers, in their rush to carry out the "prescription" of the course of study, do not develop in the child an understanding of relationship between the sound and the sound symbol. Consequently the child is entirely ignorant of the matter or confused. Unless this relationship is understood, teaching phonics becomes impossible. Teachers must realize that mere presentation is not enough. Nor is understanding enough, for the child must make functional his knowledge and skills or they may pass into academic limbo.

As the teacher gains insight into the learning processes involved in learning phonics and develops methodology making possible learning by individual children, she will build upon what the children already possess to teach them to hear and discriminate among words, to hear and discriminate among sounds, to make visual discriminations, to associate sounds with symbols, to put into use immediately what they have learned. If the child fails at a certain point, the teacher should immediately attempt to ascertain at what point the continuity of the learning has been broken. Such an awareness on the part of the teacher insures steady growth in the development and the application of word recognition techniques.

Until pupils have learned how to use a table of contents and an index, to find a volume, to select pertinent information, they should not be assigned to do encyclopedia reading without active guidance and supervision. Until pupils have seen the need of a dictionary and can make use of it, they should not be required to work with it. Until pupils have learned to get details and total meaning from their reading and have seen purpose, they should not be required to learn the outline.

In planning to develop these skills, teachers make use of exercises found in readers, textbooks, and work books. Children's responses in

these exercises should be examined for whatever information they can give regarding their understanding or lack of understanding. Workbooks should be used for testing and for diagnosing, not for marking. And if a child fails to achieve the objective of an exercise, the teacher should provide additional similar exercises and guidance until the child indicates by his performance that he understands the matter or can make use of a skill. That a child has done an exercise does not mean that he understands or knows how to do it. Even checking the exercise and explaining the exercise are not enough. Checking should be followed by diagnosis and explanation. Then another similar exercise should be administered. Therefore for many children workbook exercises must be supplemented by home-made exercises. As a matter of fact, herein lies one of the weakness of workbooks; they often do not contain enough exercises to insure for the child functional application of a skill.

To individualize the learning situation, the teacher must provide suitable and adequately numerous materials to develop a skill or a concept.

In short, effective teaching depends upon learning. The conscientious teacher attempts to make possible for the child a continuous band of learning. The emphasis, then, is upon the learner, whose status must constantly be known by the teacher and whose weaknesses must be carefully diagnosed so that proper and adequate experiencing can be planned. A teacher so minded will develop a program so constituted that not only will individual differences be recognized but also individual personalities will emerge in a happy, congenial, and wholesome academic and social environment.

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# Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVOTNY<sup>1</sup>

"Where can I find a listing of recommended radio listening?" This question has been repeated by classroom teachers and administrators in every group meeting devoted to a discussion of radio and its implications. In answer to this need, *Elementary English* takes pleasure in presenting through these columns the complete listing of recommended network programs set up by the Federal Radio Education Committee.\*

All hours are EST. Check your newspaper for local outlets and time. Space has been provided for inserting this information. Grade levels have been recommended by the committee: E (elementary), J (junior high), S (senior high), A (adult). Networks include ABC (American Broadcasting Company), CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), MBS (Mutual Broadcasting System), and NBC (National Broadcasting Company).

Your comments on the usefulness of this service to your needs are solicited. Address the editor of this department in care of *Elementary English*.

## SUNDAY

### THIS IS EUROPE (S-A)

Starting Nov. 1949 MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Each week a different European country is visited with famous artists and composers of that country participating in the program, together with a leading personality to give listeners a picture of the country as it is today. Each week an original orchestral work composed especially for the program is performed for the first time over the air on "This is Europe".

### NORTHWESTERN REVIEWING STAND (S-A)

11:30 a. m.—12:00 noon MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Broadcast since 1934 in cooperation with

Northwestern University it is a panel discussion on questions of national interest and significance, which offers authoritative opinions on economic, political and social problems, the arts, the sciences and other educational subjects. The panel consists of from three to five participants. The speakers are carefully selected from their respective fields, and the program is under the direction of Robert E. Buchanan, who also moderates the program.

### MUTUAL'S CHORAL SERIES (J-S-A)

12:00—12:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Outstanding college and university groups have been scheduled for this popular choral series which is designed to highlight the varied types of songs, ranging from religious and classical melodies to folk songs and modern jazz, which today comprise the musical curricula in the American schools.

### INVITATION TO LEARNING (S-A)

12:00—12:30 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Distinguished scholars, authors, and critics meet informally to discuss the outstanding classics of world literature. Lyman Bryson is chairman.

### PIANO PLAYHOUSE (J-S-A)

12:30—1:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

This program features solos, duets, and improvisations by outstanding pianists in both jazz and classical music.

### PEOPLE'S PLATFORM (S-A)

12:30—1:00 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Provocative issues of the day informally

\*Mrs. Gertrude Broderick, secretary, FREC; Belmont Farley, public relations director, NEA; Hazel Kenyon Markel, education director, WTOP; and Prof. Clyde Huber, Wilson Teachers College.

<sup>1</sup>Miss Novotny is principal of the Oriole Park School in Chicago and a member of the Council's Committee on Radio.

debated by two or more speakers who stress their opposing views, but seek also a common meeting ground.

#### OBERLINE RADIO YOUNG ARTISTS SERIES (J-S-A)

1:15—1:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A series using alternate wood-wind, vocal, string and brass ensembles with soloists featuring the different types of instruments in these four divisions. Each group is under the direction of a nationally known musician.

#### AMERICA UNITED (S-A)

1:00—1:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Discussions of currently important problems of labor, agriculture, and industry. Presented alternately in cooperation with American Federation of Labor, CIO, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Grange, and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

#### FINE ARTS QUARTET (J-S-A)

1:00—1:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Chamber music groups composed of Leonard Sorkin, first violinist; Joseph Stepansky, second violinist; Sheppard Lehnhoff, viola; and George Sopkin, cellist. The group was organized in 1941 and has achieved world fame.

#### UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE (S-A)

1:30—2:00 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Discussions of current national and international affairs by persons prominent in government, industry, science, and education.

#### NBC THEATRE (S-A)

2:00—3:00 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A dramatic survey of modern American fiction from Henry James to Katherine Anne Porter.

#### THIS WEEK AROUND THE WORLD (J-S-A)

2:00—2:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Easy-to-listen-to review of the week's

news. The narrative from New York is supplemented by on-the-scene reports from six or eight ABC reporters who have been eye witnesses to the top stories of the week.

#### MR. PRESIDENT (J-S-A)

2:30—3:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A dramatic program starring Edward Arnold and based on the interesting human incidents which occurred in the lives of the Presidents. Identification of the President around whose life the story is woven is not revealed until the end of the program.

#### YOU ARE THERE (J-S-A)

2:30—3:00 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

CBS newsman, John Daly, and a cast of outstanding radio actors enact great historical moments as though they were actually happening today and being reported on the air.

#### N. Y. PHILHARMONIC SYMPHONY (S-A)

3:00—4:30 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

America's oldest symphony orchestra in its 19th consecutive season on CBS.

#### LIVING 1949 (S-A)

4:00—4:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Documentary series designed to set Americans thinking more about currently important problems and to arouse them to intelligent action.

#### VOICES THAT LIVE (S-A)

4:00—4:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

An "antique" record program emceed by Wally Butterworth. Such artists as Caruso, Melba, McCormick, and Tetrazzini are played in a collection of recordings dating back to 1895.

#### HOUSE OF MYSTERY (J-S-A)

4:00—4:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A unique adventure series designed to expose the scientific and logical foundation for happenings and stories that apparently have a supernatural basis. Roger Elliott,

identified on the program as storyteller, invites young listeners into his house each week for a journey into the realm of the unknown, and demonstrates that ghosts, witches and other unearthly phenomena are actually non-existent; that belief in them results from a lack of knowledge of certain natural causes. Such mysterious forces to children as magnetism, tide movements, freakish weather, and electronics are used to background the adventure stories.

#### MILTON CROSS OPERA ALBUM (S-A)

4:30—5:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Milton Cross plays records of familiar operatic selections and gives a running commentary.

#### FAMILY CLOSEUP (S-A)

5:00—5:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A dramatic program designed to inform the listeners of problems of marriage and the family and that there are family counselling services in practically every city in the country ready to help people with personal problems at no cost to them. This program is presented in co-operation with the Family Service Association and its agencies throughout the country.

#### THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD (J-S-A)

5:30—6:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

New Testament stories dramatized under the supervision of Fulton Oursler, internationally known writer and senior editor of Reader's Digest.

#### AUTHOR MEETS THE CRITICS (S-A)

6:30—7:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Timely, uninhibited half-hour discussions in which an author comes to grips with two critics. Recent and controversial books are discussed.

#### THEATRE GUILD ON THE AIR (J-S-A)

8:30—9:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Adaptations of notable stage successes with leading stage and film stars in the major roles. Produced by Theatre Guild.

#### THE ENCHANTED HOUR (J-A)

8:30—9:00 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

"The Enchanted Hour"—a semi-classical program comprising excerpts from popular operas and operettas, starring Nancy Carr. The 35-piece orchestra is under the direction of Henry Weber, Mutual's Midwest Division Music Director.

#### SYLVAN LEVIN OPERA CONCERT (S-A)

9:00—9:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Guest opera stars of the Metropolitan and New York City Opera Associations appear weekly in this specially prepared program of classical music from such works as Pagliacci, Carmen, Rigoletto, Il Trovatore and Magic Flute. Sylvan Levin, Mutual Broadcasting System Musical Director in New York City conducts.

#### DON WRIGHT CHORUS (J-S-A)

10:30—11:00 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A fourteen-voice choir with piano accompaniment, directed by Don Wright, in a weekly presentation of old songs in new arrangements. Broadcast in cooperation with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

#### MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

#### HEADLINE EDITION (S-A)

7:05—7:15 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Taylor Grant, well-known ABC news reporter, handles this fast-moving program covering up-to-the-minute headline news and featuring interviews with the days headliners. His guests appear either in person or through on-the-spot recordings.

#### MUTUAL NEWSREEL (J-S-A)

10:15—10:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A swift-moving panorama of the day's news drama, humor and controversy told by the people whose voices you hear making the news from where it happens. This program constitutes a supplement to spot newscasts in the manner of seeing a newsreel after reading the daily paper, by means of special lines, wire and tape recorders and international short-wave hook-ups.



MONDAY

THE TELEPHONE HOUR (J-S-A)

9:00—9:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

The world's greatest musical artists are soloists with symphony orchestra directed by Donald Voorhees.

TUESDAY

CAVALCADE OF AMERICA (S-A)

8:00—8:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Stories of famous and little-known people who have helped make America great.

CARNEGIE HALL (J-S-A)

8:00—8:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Featuring a 35-piece orchestra under the direction of Frank Black, the program presents both classical and semi-classical musical selections. Guest stars are heard in their best-known roles, and top ranking singers, as well as leading instrumentalists, perform.

AMERICA' TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR (S-A)

8:30—9:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Radio's sounding board for discussion of the social, political, and economic issues uppermost in the minds of the American people. Outstanding authorities in the field under discussion are chosen to speak on these broadcasts. George V. Denny, Jr., President of Town Hall, Inc. is moderator.

TIME FOR DEFENSE (S-A)

10:00—10:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Presented in cooperation with the National Military Establishment. The program will consist of a large concert orchestra, choral groups, vocalists, big name guests and Service background and ranking men of the Army, Navy, and Air Forces.

LABOR-MANAGEMENT SERIES (S-A)  
AS WE SEE IT

10:30—10:45 ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Interview type program presenting union viewpoint. Time shared alternately with CIO.

LET FREEDOM RING

10:45—11:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Dramatized true stories of American industry are presented in cooperation with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. Time shared alternately with the National Association of Manufacturers.

WEDNESDAY

ON TRIAL (S-A)

10:30—11:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

In cooperation with the Association of the Bar of New York City, national and international issues are "placed on trial" by well-known attorneys and Congressmen. Through the process of direct and cross-examinations, the program attempts to clarify a different issue during each broadcast.

CAPITAL CLOAK ROOM (J-S-A)

10:30—11:00 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

From the nation's capital, CBS brings each week an informal interview with a member of Congress on an important issue before the Congress.

THURSDAY

CALIFORNIA CARAVAN (J-S-A)

8:00—8:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

The colorful history of the Pioneer West is dramatized in "California Caravan". Authentic, yet oftentimes little-known facts, humorous stories and action-packed incidents culled from the records, books and other factual material gathered and edited by a staff of researchers, form the basis for this new series.

FISHING AND HUNTING CLUB OF THE AIR (J-S-A)

8:30—8:55 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Dedicated to the great out-of-doors and to the conservation and propagation of America's vast wild-life and natural resources, this program is conducted by moderator Bill Slater and a panel of sports experts: Dave Newell, author and expert on wildlife; Jim Hurley, outdoor

editor of the "New York Daily Mirror"; and amateur sportsmen Gail Bordon and Jeff Bryant. They answer questions sent in by listeners, with prizes and valuable sports equipment awarded those sending in the best questions and most hints to sportsmen.

#### HALLMARK PLAYHOUSE (J-S-A)

10:00—10:30 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

James Hilton, noted author, each week selects a well-known book or short story to be dramatized.

#### FRIDAY

#### MEET THE PRESS (S-A)

9:30—10:00 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

An unrehearsed "press conference of the air" in which four reporters from the nation's leading newspapers question the most prominent person in the news that week. No punches are pulled—the personality interviewed is asked to explain or justify his position and statements on subjects of national interest. Off-the-record material is often revealed. "MEET THE PRESS" has attained the signal distinction of being covered every week by A. P., U. P., and INS. With the exception of the moderator, the program's personalities change from week to week—both in the persons of the interviewing reporters and in the person of the interviewed guest.

#### THE AIR FORCE HOUR (J-S-A)

9:00—9:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

The Official Air Force Concert Orchestra, singing Sergeants and soloist Sgt. Glenn Darwin, under the direction of Col. George F. Howard, broadcast the only all-GI program now on a national network.

#### SATURDAY

#### AMERICAN FARMER (J-S-A)

12:30—1:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A program devoted to special phases of agriculture—livestock shows, state fairs, business reports, and meetings and discussion problems of land-grant colleges. Organizations such as 4-H Clubs and the

National Grange are invited to participate. The U. S. Department of Agriculture presents a five-minute feature on each broadcast.

#### CAMPUS SALUTE (S-A)

1:30—1:55 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A weekly broadcast presenting the U. S. Army Band in salutes to different colleges throughout the country who are assisting the Government's national defense program through reserve officer training. Captain Hugh Curry is director of the Band.

#### METROPOLITAN OPERA (J-S-A)

2:00—5:15 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

ABC presents weekly the Saturday matinee performances of the Metropolitan Opera.

#### ADVENTURES IN SCIENCE (S-A)

3:15—3:30 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Watson Davis, Director of Science Service, brings to the microphone prominent guest scientists who explain recent discoveries in industry and medicine.

#### CROSS SECTION, U. S. A. (S-A)

3:30—4:00 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Interviews with representative Americans on current questions of paramount public interest.

#### MEMO FROM LAKE SUCCESS (S-A)

6:15—6:30 p. m. CBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly presentation by United Nations Radio Division of actuality reports human interest stories and feature material of UN activities on all fronts.

#### NBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (S-A)

6:30—7:30 p. m. NBC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Programs of standard symphonic music. Arturo Toscanini is permanent conductor; guest directors take over during part of the season.

#### BANDS FOR BONDS (J-S-A)

6:30—6:45 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_  
Local time \_\_\_\_\_

A different popular orchestra each week entertains in order to promote the sales of Savings Bonds. Broadcast is in cooperation with the U. S. Treasury Department.

**HAWAII CALLS (J-S-A)**

7:00—7:30 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Music of the Islands, broadcast directly from the famous Waikiki Beach and displaying Hawaiian rhythms with friendly and distinctive continuity. A custom of the program each week is the sending of "Aloha" salutes to various sections of the United States, usually featuring the home state of present visitors to the Island.

**CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR (S-A)**

10:00—11:00 p. m. MBS Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

In its tenth season, "CHICAGO THEATRE OF THE AIR" features a full hour of the world's greatest operas (presented in English) and light operas adapted for radio and presented by an all-star cast, guest operatic singers and a chorus of over one hundred performers. The orchestra is conducted by Henry Weber.

**VOICES THAT LIVE (S-A)**

10:00—10:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

An "antique" program emceed by Wally

Butterworth. Such artists as Caruso, Melba, McCormick, and Tetrazzini will be played in a collection of recordings dating back to 1895. Same program as Sunday afternoons with different recordings used.

**TUESDAY****TELEVISION****ON TRIAL (S-A)**

7:30—8:00 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

In cooperation with the Association of the Bar of New York City, national and international issues are "placed on trial" by well-known attorneys and Congressmen. Through the process of direct and cross-examinations, the program attempts to clarify a different issue during each broadcast.

**AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR (S-A)**

8:30—9:30 p. m. ABC Sta. \_\_\_\_\_

Local time \_\_\_\_\_

Simultaneous telecast of famous radio program. (Meetings have been out of town recently, so program is not at present being televised)

**THE LANGUAGE OF FIRST GRADE CHILDREN II**

(Continued from Page 474)

preparation of beginning reading materials. In the meantime, teachers can improve the situation by using an even larger number of experience reading charts and

booklets. Such materials more nearly reflect the pattern of speech employed by the children, as well as their present level of experience.

Do you have a copy of the January, 1949 issue of *Elementary English*? We will pay 50c for a copy of this issue. Please send to: John J. DeBoer, Editor, *Elementary English*, 208 Gregory Hall, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

# The Educational Scene

Edited by MARGARET STEWART<sup>1</sup>

*Children's Books About Foreign Countries* (35c per copy), edited by Helen R. Sattley, is a reprint of five related articles appearing in *Elementary English* from January to May 1949.

Articles included in the reprint are: "Evaluation and Reevaluation", by Helen R. Sattley; "Children's Books About Canada," by Alice W. Fedder; "Children's Books About Russia," by Allie Beth Martin; "Children's Books About India," by Lauretta G. McCusker; and "Children's Books About Africa," by Viola K. Fitch. Orders for reprints will be filled by National Council of Teachers of English, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago 21, Ill.

The Children's Book Council reports in "The Looking Glass" for Oct. Nov. and Dec. that the idea of a Book Fair for boys and girls appears to be gaining in popularity in this country as more and more cities are trying it as an adjunct of Book Week. Washington, D. C., Chicago, Newark, Los Angeles, and New York are cities which have carried out the idea successfully. The article "Packaged Book Fairs," in the handbook, *Make Friends with Books*, tells how and why such a project was carried out in Michigan City, Indiana.

The quarterly publication of the Council carries regularly a book calendar and a column on news and views in the field of books for children.

*Make Friends With Books* is the new and comprehensive 128-page handbook published by the Children's Book Council to serve as a guide for promoting and carrying through a variety of programs for Book Week. The handbook (\$1.00 each) is available from the Children's Book Council, 62 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Articles by specialists in children's books, and suggestions of sources of material for programs will be helpful for schools,

libraries, and community groups planning Book Week Activities.

*Book Fairs Inc.*, Michigan City, Indiana offers without cost, a packaged book fair composed of 300 to 2000 chosen books on all subjects, specially selected to meet the needs of a particular group.

Books Fairs Inc. selects the number of books and titles, a hand picked assortment best suited to special requirements (based on answers to a simple questionnaire) and ships the book to the group sponsoring the project. A committee from a school, library, or community plans a display to last from one to three days, in a school, clubhouse, or community hall.

Books are displayed and sold at retail price. At the close of the sale the committee sponsoring the fair keeps 20 percent of the total amount of the sales, and sends the rest to Book Fairs Inc.

Requests for questionnaires and all other communications should be sent to Book Fairs, Inc., 107 East Fourth Street, Michigan City, Indiana.

The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History has announced the preparation of material for use in the observance of Negro History Week from the 12th to the 19th of February.

The Negro History Week Kit includes the Negro History Pamphlet with material for recitations, declamations, plays, suggestive programs for each day of the week, and ample bibliographical material. In the Negro History Week Kit also will be descriptive literature and 24 pictures reflecting the epochs in the development of the Negro.

<sup>1</sup>Miss Stewart is Instructor in Rhetoric at the University of Illinois.



The kit is available for \$2.50 from the Associated Publishers Inc., 1538 Ninth Street, N. W., Washington 1, D. C.

The Reading Clinic of Temple University has announced the seventh annual reading clinic institute for the week of January 30 to February 3, 1950.

The emphasis for the 1950 clinic will be on basic reading materials and practices. During this institute the following sequence of topics will be presented: (1) differentiated guidance in reading, (2) the language arts approach to reading, (3) vocabulary development, word analysis and semantic analysis, (4) directed reading activities (5) development of versatility in skimming, rapid reading, and study-type reading; (6) development of assimilative and critical reading abilities, (7) materials of reading instruction, and (8) corrective and remedial procedures.

Activities include lectures, demonstrations, laboratory practices, evaluation of reading programs, seminars, staff meetings, and personal conferences.

Enrollment is limited by advance registration. For a copy of the program and other information regarding these institutes write to: Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Director, The Reading Clinic, Temple University, Philadelphia 22, Penn.

Another project to stimulate interest in children's reading is being carried on by Ruth Tooze, Director of the Children's Book Shelf.

Mrs. Tooze has for exhibit a carefully selected collection of about eight hundred children's books ranging from pre-school through junior high. The collection is chosen by Mrs. Tooze in consultation with Children's editors, teachers, parents, and children.

All types of books are included: information about the world around us; stories of animals, of children themselves, of families who lived

long ago, people of foreign countries, books of humor, folklore, poetry, music, etc.

The exhibit is available to any group of people interested in children. Ruth Tooze travels with the exhibit, telling stories, discussing new aspects of reading, lecturing about children's books of today and their importance to the modern home and school.

There is a fee to cover expenses in the community from \$5.00 to \$25.00 depending on the length of time and the plans for the display.

For further information address all inquiries to: The Children's Book Shelf, Ruth Tooze, Directory, 107 East Fourth Street, Michigan City, Indiana.

Children would need less remedial work in reading if they were helped to develop their reading ability as fully as possible at each stage of readiness for new experiences writes Ruth Strang in the October issue of *The Packet*, Heath's service bulletin for elementary teachers.

In the article Miss Strang distinguishes seven distinct developmental stages.

The first of these is in infancy when the baby learns to look and to recognize objects. The second stage is the building of oral language arts in those experiences of pre-school years. The third stage is that of beginning reading in the primary grades. In the fourth stage, in grades four to six, the basic skills are broadened and put to work. The fifth stage covers high school years in which pupils develop proficiency in reading in each of the contents fields. The individual moves in the sixth stage toward a broadening and deepening of reading interests. The seventh stage of adult reading features the practical use of reading in one's vocation, in one's social relationships, and in one's enjoyment of leisure time.

Ruth Strang's article emphasizes the needs of the individual at these various stages and

cites illustrations of situations to provide the desirable experiences.

Bernadotte School which opened in Copenhagen this fall is believed to be the first real "world school" established with aim "to train children too meet the needs of social life within their own country and, at the same time, qualify them to become active and suitable members of a world community."

The 270 pupils attending the school on its opening day came from Britain, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, China, Spain, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, the United States, Poland and South Africa. Their parents are embassy officials, doctors, reporters and other professional and business men resident in Scandinavia.

The idea of the school originated with G. J. Arvin, principal of the Danish Teachers College who published an article in 1946 on "The Danish School of Tomorrow." The interest and enthusiasm for the idea shown by Mrs. Mary Stewart, widow of a United States professor, resulted in negotiations with British and United States officials who in 1947 began planning with persons from countries all over the world.

The school, established this fall with Mr. Arvin as headmaster, is open to children of all nationalities, regardless of race, religion, or economic level.

Miss Eleanor M. Johnson, managing editor of American Education Press, Columbus, in a recent speech to teachers of reading listed the elements of a good reading lesson as: readiness of the child, silent reading under the teacher's guidance, answering motivating questions, oral rereading to prove a point, and critical thinking.

Miss Johnson stressed the importance of the language arts of listening, reading, writing, and spelling as a means to personal and social adjustment in a "world of language."

Dr. Althea K. Hottel, national president of the American Association of University Women who has returned from a round the world-tour covering 12 world capitals which was conducted by officials of radio's Town Meeting program, reports the shortage of educational opportunities as one of the most critical needs in the world today.

"As one travels east from Europe towards Asia, poverty becomes increasingly evident. Education, along with wealth, is confined to a small group of elite."

The New Jersey Nutrition Council urges that the sale of candy should be stopped in public schools because the Council believes that candy causes dental decay and wreaks havoc with children's appetites.

The sale of candy in public schools is particularly harmful because children cannot brush their teeth immediately after eating.

The New Jersey Nutrition Council also believes that candy is used by children as a substitute for important foods. It satisfies appetites. As a result, children push away their vegetables and meat.

The New Jersey Nutrition Council calls upon school administrators to study this problem "with the end in view of discontinuing the sale of candy in public schools."

Some teachers can be a source of maladjustment by the kind of counseling techniques they employ.

Dr. D. S. Arbuckle, Boston University, recently conducted an experiment to determine actual teacher comments in the individual teacher-pupil relationship and to examine them as a cause of child maladjustment.

Approximately 100 teachers from elementary and high schools in Massachusetts were asked to make verbatim reports of their conversations with students when they felt they were acting in the role of counsellor.

(Continued on Page 509)

## Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue were written by Charlemae Robbins, Ralph Thompson, Frances Rees, Hannah M. Lindahl, Elena Baker, Margaret S. Skiff, Katharine Hodapp, Mary M. Birmingham, Audrey F. Carpenter, Celia B. Stendler, and Dorothy Hinman.]

### *For the Teacher*

*Reading with Phonics.* By Julie Hay and Charles E. Wingo. J. B. Lippincott.

The question of the place of phonics in a reading program has been debated for at least twenty years. When psychologists began to emphasize the importance of learning in wholes rather than by parts, the old emphasis on breaking words into parts began to diminish and teachers instead concentrated on the development of a sight vocabulary. Phonics were considered old-fashioned and not quite respectable during this era.

Now, however, most reading experts as well as classroom teachers recognize that phonics do have a place in the reading program, although the function they serve has changed considerably. Instead of beginning with phonics and building a vocabulary by putting sounds together, phonics come in as a method, but only one method, of attacking new words. Furthermore, help with phonics comes in when and if a child needs it - not indiscriminately for a whole group. As primary teachers can testify, many good readers pick up a phonetic sense by themselves with little or no instruction.

*Reading with Phonics*, however, does not fit this modern conception of the place of phonics in a reading program. Indeed, it is a definite return to the philosophy of the 1920's, and if followed, will produce no better readers than we were turning out at that time. It is a

deadly, mechanical approach to reading which, at best, will produce children who call words but do not comprehend what they read, and at worst, will develop emotional blocks to reading on the part of those children who fail to see any connection between reading and "the sound of F as a voiceless continuant."

The reading program as outlined in *Reading with Phonics* begins with the letter *ă*. First the children are taught auditory discrimination by listening for the *ă* sound; then they are taught visual discrimination by having them point to the letter *a* and sound it. This is, in essence, the methods the authors advocate. Vowels are taught first, then certain consonants, then blends. Games are employed as devices to hold interest. Following each phonic lesson, the child turns to his reader for practice in reading.

In addition to the fact that this approach is contrary to what we know about how learning takes place, one wonders at the naivete of the authors who say, "Have the children put their fingers under a and sound it. This is watching sight and sound." A first grader may put his finger on a letter (although half the class may point to *b* instead), and he may even say it, but to assume that in his mind the connection between sight and sound is made is foolish, indeed. It would be much safer to assume that, since there is no sense to this job as the six-year old sees it, his mind will be engaged with more interesting and challenging thoughts.

One wonders, too, whether the authors have ever had the thrill of seeing a group of children learn to read by the use of modern methods. The zest with which these children approach reading and the zeal with which they read will almost certainly be lost if we turn

the clock back twenty years with "*Reading with Phonics*."

Celia B. Stendler  
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### *For Early Adolescents*

*Young Razzle*. By John R. Tunis. William Morrow, \$2.50.

Young people who enjoyed John Tunis' *All-American* and his *Iron Duke* will be thrilled with this story. It's baseball...the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees again battling for the World Series crown.

Old Razzle, once a star pitcher for the Dodgers, now on his way out of the major league but trying hard to stage a come-back; Young Razzle, his son, a rookie star on the Yankee's team who has been taught by his mother to hate his father. The two meet as bitter enemies in the last game of the series when Old Razzle comes in as a relief pitcher. Young Razzle at the bat faces his father on the mound, each fighting fiercely for his own team...and for something more...respect for each other. Highly recommended for 7th grade through high school.

C. R.

*The Story of Phillis Wheatley*. By Shirley Graham. Julian Messner, \$2.75.

The tragic picture of a five-year-old child on the auction block so stirred the heart of Mrs. Mary Wheatley, a Boston woman, that she bought the little girl, took her home, and gave her a name. Nat Wheatley, the son of the family, a student at Harvard, and his sister Mary taught her to read and write. Phillis repaid their love and patience by learning to read and translate the classic writings of Vergil and Ovid. She wrote poems that were praised by George Washington, John Hancock, and Tom Paine. She was invited to England and entertained by the Countess of Huntington, the Lord Mayor of London, and others. Her poems were published in England and America. Shirley Graham has taken the meager facts

available on the life of Phillis Wheatley and against the background of America's struggle for independence woven a moving story of the slave girl whose simple poems were also a plea for freedom. Fully documented and indexed. Includes *Liberty and Peace*, her best known poem, and excerpts from a few others.

C. R.

*The Davenports and Cherry Pie*. By Alice Dalgliesh. Illustrated by Flavis Gag. Scribner's, \$2.50.

Although the Davenports make many of their family crises public through their radio program, their more serious problems are the result of delicate interpersonal adjustments too private even for family discussion. John the adolescent, Kathy and Barbara the preadolescents, and Ricky the young angel-demon find it difficult to accept Emily, their new stepmother, and her spoiled young daughter, Lynette. Father, as an artist, seems too busy trying to create magazine covers to sense the subtle difficulties. When the children are alone to face a fast-approaching Christmas and when Lynette comes home from the hospital after her second bout with rheumatic fever, family relations are tense; but with the help of the maturing understanding of the older children and the insight of Emily, the two "families" are made one. Finally, Cherry Pie, the French poodle who began as a temporary and despised adjunct of the family, becomes a Davenport, too. Although some of the solutions to interpersonal tensions seem a bit too pat, the story will help early adolescents gain insight into the many family problems.

R. T.

*Cedar's Boy*. By Stephen W. Meader. Illustrated by Lee Townsend. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50.

It was a red-letter day for Shad Davis when he was hired to attend the race horses of Hartley Martin at the Riverdale Fair. But more exciting days were ahead than he had dreamed of. These were days filled with the usual ex-



citing activities of a County Fair, to say nothing of Shad's part in rescuing a horse from a deliberately set fire, his alertness in the capture of an escaped prisoner, and especially his ability to rise to the occasion when it seemed that Cedar's Boy would be driverless when the day came for the big race.

Stephen Meader has told a fast, convincing race-track story of his well-known Red Horse Hill folks and horses, weaving in skillfully the atmosphere of the New Hampshire fair. There are the pie judging, the barkers on the well-loved midway, "spectacular" side shows, as well as the traditional crooks awaiting their chances.

F. R.

*It Might Be You.* By Ruth Adams Knight. Doubleday, \$2.00.

John Allen Hawkins of Revolutionary war days, Lazaro, a poor Mexican lad, Jacques, the son of a liberator of France, who lived through St. Bartholomew's Eve, Rosebud, an American of Japanese birth, Willamina Watson, a young Negro girl, and the young Joseph of Rome in the early days of Christianity, all lived in different places and at different times, but all of them in childhood or youth experienced a cruel bitterness they could not understand. In their hearts the burning question was "why"?

Ruth Adams Knight in a series of dramatic and poignant stories brings forcibly to her readers the universal tragedy in the lives of youth of persecution and intolerance, the cruel, vicious result of distrust and fear.

Although it is not the type of book youngsters will pick up and read for pleasure, it holds good reading for those who are introduced to it. Leaders of young people will find here better sermons than mere words could preach.

F. R.

*Melindy's Happy Summer.* By Georgene Faulkner. Illustrated by Elton C. Fax. Julian Messner, \$2.50.

Children who have read *Melindy's Medal*

will be delighted to learn that the author has written another story about this lovable ten-year-old child. Melindy is one of a group of Negro children sent as "ambassadors of good will" to spend two weeks of the summer vacation in the farm homes of white families. At White Clover Farm, Melindy has exciting experiences in which she proves herself a worthy ambassador of her race. The happy relationships which develop between Melindy and her new friends as she works and plays with them are portrayed with understanding and sincerity.

H. M. L.

*The Story of Franklin D. Roosevelt.* By Marcus Rosenblum. Simon & Schuster, \$1.50.

Rebelling against lessons, naps, meals, piano practice, and other routine duties at home, Franklin D. Roosevelt at the age of five years sighed "Oh for freedom." This childish desire for freedom was the force which later drove him to fight relentlessly for his world-famed "Four Freedoms." The author emphasizes other interesting and significant episodes of his childhood and later life to bring this hero alive for children. Illustrated with photographs and attractive line drawings for grades five and six.

C. R.

*Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.* Adapted by R. A. Pulliam and O. N. Darby. Illustrated by Elizabeth Rice. The Steck Company, \$1.50.

These adapted stories bring up the question of how far one can successfully go in interpreting adult stories for children. Certainly there have been some fine retelling of old folk tales; but *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* belong to the time they were written and the locale in which the action takes place. More specifically, Washington Irving invested the plots with a charm and magic which depend on the words themselves; and it is many of these words which have been lost in the version for 9-to-12-year-olds. Although the adapters, one director of the reading clinic and

the other a professor of English at Mississippi Southern College, have done an excellent job of faithfully and clearly reproducing the plots, one wonders whether it is not just as well to let most future junior high and high school students wait for the original stories. It may be that this version is useful in special cases.

E. B.

*Boarding School.* By Regina J. Woody. Houghton, \$2.50.

Thirteen year-old Abby Hawes found that being a freshman at Waban Hall Academy in Maine required much adjustment after an easy-going life travelling with her artist parents. She had to learn the traditions, rules, and customs of a girls' school. A demanding and self-centered roommate complicated her strenuous attempts to get caught up in history and mathematics.

Junior high school girls will welcome this rather average boarding school story, although they may be impatient at Abby's lack of independence with her roommate.

M. S. S.

*The Canvas Castle.* By Alice Rogers Hager. Illustrated by Mary Stevens. Julian Messner, \$2.50.

Twelve-year-old Maidie Harper was accustomed to a roving life, but when the family settled in a "canvas castle" on a hilltop in California, she hoped for a permanent home. The addition of a very best friend and a pony named Ginger completed her happiness. Then Father was transferred to Alaska and an unhappy rebellious Maidie learned that a happy family can make a castle anywhere. This story of a cooperative family group makes an engrossing tale for teen-agers.

H. M. L.

*Come Be My Love.* By Lavinia R. Davis. Doubleday, \$2.50.

Jessica Infield Bolton, known as Jib, found herself on her own for the summer when her family moved from New England to Cali-

fornia. After an unhappy few weeks as social secretary to the wealthy Mrs. Appersley, she found a job gardening, and a home with a cousin. She became involved with the community labor and conservation problems when she fell in love with a young government soil expert. Teen age girls who are looking for a love story will enjoy this book although the writing is undistinguished.

M. S. S.

*Miss Anna Truly.* By V. H. Drummond. Illustrated by the author. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.00.

One day when Anna went to the woods behind her farm to pick bluebells, she met John Purse, a neighbor. John told her that she was trespassing. She insisted that this was *her* father's land. Even after the fathers, the workers, and the animals had joined in the discussion, no one could decide whom the land belonged to. So Anna went to London to ask the King.

Anna has many quaint and exciting adventures on her way to London, in the city, and especially at the King and Queen's masked ball. There she dances with a boy masked as a bear . . . John Purse himself, who came to London for the same purpose as Anna! The story ends in the best fairy tale tradition; when the children grow up they are to be married and then the land will belong to both. Four-to-eight-year-olds who love Christopher Robin and can look forward to Mary Poppins, will also like the very English Miss Anna Truly. The pictures are in keeping with the story, and have somewhat the flavor of those by Van Loon.

E. B.

*Battle Lanterns.* By Merritt P. Allen. Longmans, \$2.50.

Fifteen year-old Bill Barlow traveled from New York to Charlestown to find the gold his father had buried there. He was kidnapped by a pirate, sold into slavery for two years, and finally escaped with Luke, a Negro. General Marion befriended him and Bill became in-

volved in the American Revolution. Junior high school boys who like Merritt Allen's combination of action and gore, do not like this book as well as they liked *Red Heritage*, which had a more unified plot.

Although average in style, plot and character development, this book rates high in action and interest of subject. M. S. S.

*Abigail Adams; A Girl of Colonial Days.* By Jean Brown Wagoner. Illustrated by Sandra James. Bobbs-Merrill \$1.75.

The childhood of Abigail Smith Adams told in an entertaining manner. Nabby, as she was called, was a friend to all the people of the Massachusetts village where her father was minister. Her adventures in the little town, at her Grandmother Quincy's, and in Boston make a good story for younger readers. Illustrated in silhouette by Sandra James. An excellent addition to the "Childhood of Famous Americans Series." K. H.

*Candy.* By Robb White. Doubleday, \$2.50.

The story of 13 year old Candy Pritchard and her efforts to help Tony, a blind boy whom she had befriended. Candy, who lived in Beachton, Florida, was given a boat by a stranger after her own had been wrecked during a hurricane. In return for the boat she took the stranger to an uninhabited island. After numerous adventures dodging welfare workers who wanted to put Tony in a school for the blind, he and Candy went out to the island to get the stranger during a terrible storm at sea. The stranger turned out to be an eminent eye surgeon who operated on Tony and restored his sight. Realistic and vivid description of a storm at sea. Other incidents seem slightly overdrawn.

K. H.

*The Otterbury Incident.* By C. Day Lewis. Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. Viking, \$2.00.

In spite of a setting which is unfamiliar to American children (a bombed section of

the Abbey town of Otterbury in England) and equally unfamiliar British phrases and slang, boys will be fascinated by this account of two schoolboy gangs and their cooperative efforts to solve a mystery. What can be done to pay for a broken window? Who made off with the missing money box? The search for answers to these questions leads to far more dangerous quarry than anticipated and to a very satisfactory ending. Illustrations by Edward Ardizzone play an important part in the book.

H. M. L.

*Marian and Marion.* By J. M. Sellegger-Elout.

Illustrated by Hilda van Stockum. Translated by Medderigh-Bokhorst. Viking, \$2.00.

The night of the shipwreck off the coast of the Dutch village Marian found Marion. From that time she loved Marion with a possessive love which Marion was unable to understand. Marion was sensitive, shy, and graceful while Marian was robust and temperamental. Marion wanted to be a dancer, but the village people thought an orphanage child should be a seamstress.

Through many difficulties the girls became good friends. Before Marion left to continue her dancing, Marian had decided that to want a friend happy was real love. M. M. B.

*Kentucky Derby Winner.* By Isabel McLennan McMeekin. Illustrated by Corinne Dillan. David McKay, \$2.50.

This is the story of the house, Aristides, that won the first Kentucky Derby. From this first page to the last the reader feels that he is a part of the Kentucky days of long ago. Jackie is the boy who loves the horse and helps care for him from the time he is a foal until the day of the first Derby. Jackie and his friends have many wonderful days of adventure that should thrill every youngster. M. M. B.

#### *For the Middle Grades*

*What Book is That?* By Ruth Harshaw and Dilla MacBean. Macmillan, \$1.50.

Mrs. Harshaw and Mrs. MacBean have drawn on their wide experience with children, teachers, and librarians for good material for this brief book. Their purpose, as presented in the opening pages, is to stimulate a love of reading in children through suggesting ways to have fun with books. Fifteen book quizzes follow ranging from Mother Goose to Moby Dick, and fifty short dramatic sketches from well-known titles, with answers to identify all. Readers can quickly make up their own material for assemblies, radio programs, home parties, and general group enjoyment, using these as models.

A. F. C.

*The Dancing Tea Kettle and Other Japanese Folk Tales.* Retold by Yoshiko Uchida. Illustrated by Richard C. Jones. Harcourt, Brace and Company, \$2.25.

This collection of fourteen authentic folk tales includes such old favorites as the Dancing Tea Kettle, the Tongue-Cut Sparrow, and Boy-of-the-Peach. Delightfully retold, the stories have the unmistakable qualities that mean good story-telling material. They "listen" well! The illustrations contribute to the simple, direct presentation, and catch the essence of each tale in black and white drawings. Vocabulary for reading is about 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, but younger children will listen with pleasure.

A. F. C.

*The Treasure of Li-Po.* By Alice Ritchie with illustrations by T. Ritchie. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.00.

Six original Chinese fairy tales constitute this book. To me the first and last stories had the greatest merit, the others being pleasant, but of little impact. The illustrations are rather fragile and the whole book just misses having force.

A. F. C.

*Yucca Ranch.* By Margaret B. Pumphrey. Illustrated by Hilda Preibisius. Caxton, \$3.00.

The illustrations, end papers and cover jacket have a vigor and distinction that overbalance the content of the story, which tells of

the experiences of pioneer Americans who settled California. Much of the material, the author says, was taken from the tales of old settlers themselves, and perhaps that accounts for the reminiscent and passive quality of the writing. There is so little vivid action, and the conversations are so stilted that the reader's interest wanders. However, there is a great deal of information concerning the life of the times, and the format of the book is certainly beautiful.

A. F. C.

*Treasure Mountain.* By Evelyn Sibley Bennett. Illustrated by Richard Bennett. Doubleday, \$2.50.

The present day Indian characters in this story are fresh and interesting. Fourteen year old Hoxie and his ten year old sister are forced to spend some time with a very old great-aunt who spoke only her native tribal language and believed in all the ancient Indian superstitions and legends. Her knowledge of herbs, berries, and animals taught them many things but her fear of the Old Indian God kept her from aiding them in their search for the buried treasure that rumor said was buried in 1780 near her shack. The children are able to find the more practical treasure of the lost check that pays taxes on the Indian woman's home, allowing her to keep it. Thus Hoxie and his sister can come back in the future to continue their digging for the old chest. Laid in a little coastal village of Oregon, this story contains much unusual material concerning primitive ways of tanning deer hide, baking fish, using herbs for medicine and retaining tribal customs in the midst of present day life.

A. F. C.

*Gilbert, the Gay Poodle.* By Augusta and Henry Billings, Viking, \$1.50.

Gilbert was the non-conformist in the Poodle family, which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Poodle, Charlotte and Annabelle and Gilbert. But it was Gilbert who won the jackpot at the Radio Center by identifying the song that was played as "Poodles on Parade". If you like ani-



mals dressed and acting as human beings, you will like Gilbert. K. H.

*Let's Go to the Desert.* By Harriet E. Huntington. Illustrated with photographs by the author. Doubleday, \$2.50.

An excellent book on desert life for younger children. Illustrated with full page photographs by the author. Includes horned toads, Joshua tree, trade rats, and rattlesnakes. Compares favorably with the author's "Let's go outdoors" and "Let's go to the seashore." K. H.

*Peggy's Wish.* By Alletta Jones. Abingdon, \$2.00.

In spite of the pink dresses in her suitcase, read-haired, freckled Peggy was thrilled to be leaving the orphanage for a summer on a farm. Mrs. Meredith wanted to adopt Peggy, but young John and Mr. Meredith were not so sure about this lively tomboy. Ten-years-olds will enjoy the adventures of this matter-of-fact, forthright little orphan. M. S. S.

*Seatmates.* By Mary K. Reely. Franklin Watts, \$2.00.

Kate was lonely after leaving the farm to live in a small Wisconsin town at the turn of the century. Life became livelier when she was assigned to share a big double seat with Lily, the most popular girl in school. With Tottie, Grace, and the other ten-year-old girls, Kate enjoyed picnics, May baskets, the Church Christmas tree, and sleigh rides. Period flavor is very slight. The style which is so simple that only first names are used will make this easy reading for fourth grade girls. M. S. S.

*Fun-time Crafts.* By James Schwalbach. Childrens Press, \$1.25.

The author of *Fun-time Crafts* has shown a good deal of ingenuity in his selection of objects for children to make. While the products in many cases look finished enough so that the eight to twelve year old will be challenged by them, the materials used are easily available and the directions extremely simple. Paper

masks, corn dolls, pink jewelry, stick printing, beanie hats, willow whistles, are but a few of the 100 things for which directions are given. Large, colorful illustrations add additional clarity to the instructions. C. B. S.

*The Wild Birthday Cake.* By Lavinia R. Davis. Illustrated by Hildegard Woodward. Doubleday Jr. Books, \$2.50.

In this charmingly written story, Lavinia Davis tells of Johnny who discovers he has forgotten his best friend, the Professor's birthday until too late to get him a gift. Johnny forgets his despondency, however, when he makes friends with a lame wild duck and brings the duck home. How Johnny has to give up the duck and how he solves the problem of a gift for the Professor make up the balance of the story. Beautiful illustrations in soft greens, blues and yellows add immeasurably to the appeal of *The Wild Birthday Cake*. C. B. S.

*Myles Standish, Adventurous Boy.* By Augusta Stevenson. Illustrated by Paul Laune. Bobbs-Merrill, \$1.75.

Now Myles Standish, the fun-loving, ruff-resisting, adventurous lad of more than three hundred years ago, will find a warm spot in the hearts of youngsters today, who might otherwise know only the Captain Standish of Pilgrim fame. Augusta Stevenson, author of a number of the *Childhood of Famous Americans Series*, has captured the exciting spirit of Sixteenth-century England, seen through the eyes of this strong-willed son of a wealthy landowner. Although the story may not be classed strictly as biography, certainly the episodes including visits to a witch, a kidnapping by thieves, a lad's first association with Puritans risking their lives to worship as they pleased, are true to the life of the period. Youngsters have, in addition, in this very simply told story an excellent picture of home life in Standish's boyhood days. Third-and fourth-graders will enjoy the book, and older children with read-

ing problems will find the subject matter interesting and the reading not too difficult. Paul Laune's pictures in silhouette are quite effective.

F. R.

*The Vanishing Octant Mystery.* By Augusta Huiell Seaman. Illustrated by Ursula Koering. Doubleday, \$2.25.

Posey Slade's narrow escape from drowning would have been in itself an exciting enough beginning to her family's summer vacation. However, the cause of her accident, a strange object which disappeared in the surf almost as suddenly as it appeared, became the center of summer-long activity for a varied group of resort people. Mystery fans of Augusta Seaman will welcome this story centering around the search for a very rare octant, discovery of its history, and finding its significance for the people of the locality. The story maintains a high pitch of excitement, climaxed by a hurricane, but at times lacks the convincing quality usually found in Mrs. Seaman's mysteries. Its appeal will be for girls from eight to twelve.

F. R.

*Sleepy to the Rescue.* By Bob McReynolds. Photographs by Roy Davenport. Viking, \$1.50.

Sleepy, a brown and white bird dog, tells his own story. Day and night he dreams of hamburger. The search for it takes him and his best dog friend, Sandy, to the beach, to the riding stables, to the mountains. But upon one excursion up the mountain, poor Sandy is caught in a coyote trap. Sleepy's bravery and loyalty in this emergency result in hamburger every day for both dogs.

Even better than the story are the excellent photographs. Every right-hand page is a large, full-page picture taken of Sleepy in action. Kindergarten and lower-grade children enjoy looking at the pictures and hearing the story. Third and fourth graders have fun reading the book for themselves.

D. H.

*Ginnie and Geneva.* By Catherine Wooley. Illustrated by Iris Beatty Johnson. William Morrow, \$2.00.

Today was the first time in Ginnie's life that she had gone to school. Ginnie was to be in the fourth grade. How delighted she was until she met Geneva! At first Ginnie and Geneva did not get along very well, but through love and understanding they became friends. Geneva taught Ginnie how to ice skate and play with the other children. Ginnie taught Geneva to tease less and understand more often. It is the story of a beautiful friendship.

M. M. B

### *For Younger Children*

*The First Book of Automobiles.* By Campbell Tatham. Illustrated by Jeanne Bendick. Franklin Watts, Inc., \$1.50.

Here is factual information about every conceivable kind of modern automobile from trailers and jeeps to limousines, presented as descriptions of cars belonging to a particular boy or girl. In addition, *The First Book of Automobiles* includes simply written material on what makes a car run which the modern 6 to 10 year old will enjoy.

C. B. S.

*The Best Christmas.* By Lee Kingman. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney, Doubleday, \$1.50.

It promised to be a gloomy Christmas for the Seppala family, for Matti, the oldest son, was missing at sea on a stone barge. The remembrance of Matti's gifts which always made Christmas a special occasion, prompted Erkki, the ten-year-old boy to work secretly in the barn loft for two weeks as he made for each of his eight brothers and sisters and his father and mother the gifts which he felt might take the place of Matti's. The surprise on Christmas Eve was two-fold, for Matti returned and Erkki's gifts were a bigger joy than Matti's had ever been. Erkki, as the boy whose hero-worship has turned him into a family hero, is skillfully drawn.

R. T.

*Cloud Hoppers.* By Frederick James. Illustrated by Katherine Evans. Children's Press, Inc., Trade edition \$1.25. Reinforced edition, \$2.13.

Both the text and the pictures in this book will captivate the interest of children in the primary grades. The story revolves around six-year-old Johnny's playtime experiences with airplanes, with his friend Bill, and with Jeff, a little dog that belongs to Johnny's pilot uncle. When Johnny receives word that his uncle is coming, he fears that the reason for his uncle's visit is to get Jeff. Simply and naturally the author brings the story to a happy ending that will delight children.

H. M. L.

*Guess Who Lives Here.* By Louise Woodcock. New Little Golden Books (\$.25 each):

Pictures by Eloise Wilkin. An excellent book for pre-school children who will enjoy entering into the game of guessing who or what is the answer to the interesting descriptions of animals, people and things on each page.

*Two Little Miners.* By Margaret Wise Brown and Edith Thatcher Hurd. Illustrated by Richard Scarry. A commendable attempt to help young children become acquainted with some aspects of the work of a miner, but much of the material is unrealistic.

*Johnny Appleseed.* An adaptation of an old favorite from Walt Disney's *Melody Time*.

*Katie The Kitten.* By Kathryn & Byron Jackson. Pictures by Eloise Wilkin. The simple story of a kitten-done with full page illustrations and minimum text on each page.

*Good Morning and Good Night.* By Jane Werner. Pictures by Eloise Wilkin. An appealing tale of a little boy who didn't like to wake up and a little girl who didn't like to go to bed.

*Gaston and Josephine.* By Georges Duplaix. Pictures by Feodor Rojankovsky. The fantastic adventures of two French pigs en

route to America from their home in France.

C. B. S.

*Mother Goose*, illustrated by Joseph Hirsch; *The Cozy Little Farm* by Louise Bonino, illustrated by Angela; *The Three Little Kittens and other Nursery Tales*, illustrated by Rachel Taft Dixon; *The Little Dog Who Forgot How To Bark and other Stories*, illustrated by Hildegard Hopkins; *Famous Fairy Tales*, illustrated by Mervin Jules; *The ABC and Counting Book*, by Phyllis Fraser, illustrated by Jack Sarkin;

*Bedtime Stories*, illustrated by Masha; *Why The Bear Has a short tail and other stories*, illustrated by Sari; *Randolph: The Bear who said No* by Faith Nelson, illustrated by Nedda Walker; *The Race Between the Monkey and The Duck*, written and illustrated by Clement Hurd; *The Shy Little Horse and other Stories*, illustrated by Robinson; *The Little Train that Won a Medal* by Darlene Geis, illustrated by Anton Loeb; *Peter Rabbit and other Stories*, illustrated by Phoebe Erickson; *Storytime Favorites*, illustrated by Anton Loeb; *The Magic Bus* by Maurice Dolbier, illustrated by Tibor Gergely; *A Child's First Picture Dictionary* by Lillian Moore, illustrated by Nettie Weber and Charles Clement. The Wonder Books, Random House.

The Wonder Books are bound in washable covers and are printed half in color and half in black and white. A good grade of paper and clear type, as well as the attractive illustrations, make them valuable though inexpensive additions to the reading shelf. Because the publishers have chosen a wide range of authors, adaptors, and illustrators to compose the books, each is different. The stories in the series have been phrased in simple terms and reduced to the action elements which young children will enjoy.

R. T.

*Miss Flora McFlimsey's Christmas Eve.* By Mariana. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Inc., \$1.00.

The story of Miss Flora McFlimsey begins on Christmas Eve when the heroine, a doll long forgotten in the attic of an old house, comes to life. The author paints an appealing picture of the lonely doll, who had once been the beloved possession of a little girl who has since grown up. Miss Flora McFlimsey is no longer the beautiful doll she once was. Her clothes are faded and the feather in her hat is a bit bedraggled. But on this Christmas Eve a wonderful thing happens. Miss Flora McFlimsey goes downstairs to see the Christmas tree and runs into Santa Claus who places her under the tree as a gift for one of the children. The other dolls make fun of poor Miss Flora because she is so shabby. But the story ends happily with the Angel on top of the Christmas tree coming to Miss Flora's rescue and dressing her up with her blue velvet dress and hat and her little ermine muff.

The story of Miss Flora has the age old appeal of the underdog who is magically helped to overcome her difficulties. Children from five to eight will thrill to the plot and will love the detailed description of the wonderful outfit that Miss Flora finally achieves. Mariana, who is illustrator as well as author, has done some delightful old fashioned drawings which serve to bring out the quality of the book.

*Babar and Father Christmas.* By Jean De Brunhoff. Random House, Inc., \$1.00.

M. de Brunhoff continues his successful stories of Babar with the latest one, *BABAR and FATHER CHRISTMAS*. In this particular one Babar surmounts tremendous difficulties to reach Father Christmas and invite him to visit the Elephants' country during the Christmas season. The picture of the fatherly Babar and his concern for his flock is one that is a psychologically satisfying one for the pre-school and primary child.

There are several characteristics about the Babar book which merits special attention. One of these is the fact that the book is written in

the present tense which gives the child the feeling of the adventures in the story being very real. Another delightful quality is that in this particular book the American reader has the feeling of being in the know, because he is acquainted with Father Christmas, and can enjoy the presentation of the author where Zeph describes in great detail what the old gentleman does. The detail in the drawings will please the young reader as well.

*The Golden Christmas Manger.* By Helen Sewell. Simon and Schuster, \$1.00.

*The Golden Manger* is complete with cut-outs and paper figures for the Christmas setting. The little booklet is mainly a "how-to-do-it" book, showing simple directions for cutting, mounting, and placement of the figures. In addition, the Christmas story itself is re-told, and simple melodies for the little ones to sing around the crib are also provided.

B. G. S.

*Susie, the Cat.* By Tony Palazzo. Viking, \$2.50.

A gay little story, told mostly in couplets and little phrases of a cat who had ideas. And Susie's idea was to be a circus performer, particularly so after a trip to the big tent, which showed her that the famed Leo the Lion really did no tricks that she, herself, could not do. Only when her own circus was built, and she was starred as the one and only, did Susie pur-r-r and pur-r-r and pur-r-r again, in sweet content. This is primarily a picture book, with a minimum of print, and that in the simplest of form.

B. G. S.

*Mother Goose Land with Judy and Jim; A Paper Doll Story Book.* By Hilda Miloché and Wilma Kane. Simon and Schuster, \$1.00.

The strain to write a "story" which would introduce the characters of Mother Goose for which there are either separate paper dolls or costumes for Judy and Jim is immediately evident. The paper dolls, the scenes from Mother



Goose with slits for the characters, the storage trunk, and directions without a story would have given this toy book a stronger appeal. After all, the child who plays with paper dolls does have an imagination, a very active one at that. *Mother Goose Land* is definitely expendable, and, for the money, of doubtful value.

A. F.

*Is it Hard? Is it Easy?* By Mary McBurney Green. Illustrated by Lucinne Bloch. William R. Scott.

Written for pre-school children. *Is It Hard? Is It Easy?* is a story of Ann and Tim who can each do certain things. Ann finds it easy to skip, but Tim can't skip at all. Tim can tie bow knots, however, but bow-knots are hard for Ann, and so it goes. There is a nice little moral lesson, as well as good mental hygiene, involved in this story which gets across very effectively the notion that what is hard for one person may be easy for another. Furthermore, some things may be hard for all young children, and some things may be easier done in pairs. The stiff, roughly textured paper will be interesting for the young child to manipulate. The large, clear

print is excellent for the primary-grade child who will enjoy reading this book for himself.

C. B. S.

*Little Old Automobile*. Written and illustrated by Marie Hall Ets. Viking, \$1.50.

The story of *Little Old Automobile* is a delightfully written tale which successfully capitalizes on many of the elements which appeal to the young reader. It tells simply and with the repetition threes to eights love of a little old car which meets obstacle after obstacle on the road, each of which requests that the auto wait until the obstacle gets out of his way. But Little Old Automobile won't. Each time he knocks the obstacle out of his path and pursues his merry way. But each time the obstacle gets bigger and bigger and the climax is carefully built up until the Little Old Automobile tackles a big black engine and meets his doom. Young children will delight in the naughtiness of the car as he answers the request of the frog, the rabbit, the cow and the woman to wait, "No! I don't want to! I don't want to and I won't!" But they will also like the security the tale offers by having right triumph in the end.

C. B. S.

## THE EDUCATIONAL SCENE

(Continued from Page 498)

The results indicated that few teachers perform as does the counsellor. Many teachers think of the teacher's role as one where disciplining, judging, moralizing, and giving of advice and acceptance of the feelings of children is something teachers generally find difficult to achieve.

Dr. Arbuckle concluded that the actual comments of many teachers are such that they are probably a definite factor in the increased maladjustment of school children.

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